Edited by

MADELEINE BOYD

THE MEMOIRS OF CASANOVA

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THE MEMOIRS OF JACQUES CASANOVA

EDITED BY
MADELEINE BOYD

INTRODUCTION BY
ERNEST BOYD

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INTRODUCTION

GIACOMO CASANOVA, who liked to be known as Jacques Casanova de Seingalt, was born in Venice, on April 2, 1725, and died at the Château of Dux in Bohemia, on June 4, 1798. The last fourteen years of his life were spent as Count Waldstein's librarian at Dux, and it was in that retreat that he wrote the Memoirs which were to make him famous, in spite of himself, for he seems to have written chiefly to beguile his premature old age rather than with any thought of posterity. The curious and complicated history of the manuscript shows this. There are references to it in the letters and memoirs of his contemporaries, notably the Prince de Ligne, who has left a vivid picture of the author, but its publication was as haphazard and adventurous as the life of the author himself.

In 1820 a certain Carlo Angiolini, who was the son-in-law of Casanova's younger sister, brought a manuscript entitled, "The Story of My Life to the Year 1797," to the firm of Brockhaus in Leipzig. The work was in twelve volumes and ended abruptly with the year 1774. Nobody seems to know how it came into Angiolini's possession, nor what happened to the concluding portion. Even the manuscript as left by Casanova has never been printed. It was first translated from the original faulty French into German and was published, with many omissions and alterations, from 1822 to 1828. At the same time, Herr Brockhaus had the French text revised by a French professor in Dresden, named Jean Laforgue, who polished Casanova's undoubtedly shaky French, but who also made various suppressions and alterations. In this form, the work also ap-

peared in twelve volumes between 1826 and 1837. Meanwhile other editions began to appear, some of them pirated, all presenting variants upon the German and the French editions of Brockhaus, which were and are the nearest thing we have to the authentic Memoirs of Jacques Casanova.

The original manuscript still reposes in the safe of the Brockhaus firm and there is little chance of its being published in its entirety. Casanova used the crudest language in describing his amorous adventures and although certain admirers, such as Stefan Zweig, are most indignant at the withholding of the complete text, other devoted Casanovists are content to accept the German or the French versions as issued by Brockhaus. They argue that it would be a pity if a work of such intense human and historic interest should come to be classified as a mere piece of pornography. For many years poor Monsieur Laforgue and his pruderies were the object of much sarcastic comment, but recently men have risen up and called his name blessed since, but for his caution, the Memoirs would undoubtedly have been suppressed. As it was, they were not allowed to pass unchallenged by the moralists of the period when thev were first issued.

"There are people," wrote Casanova, "who will say that I ought to have been ashamed to publish these Memoirs. It is quite possible that I should, but that is not my feeling. They will call me a pig. Should I be any the less so, if I pretended I were not? Moreover, when I look at a real pig I am inclined to congratulate it on not having Man's qualities of mind. I should be infinitely less disposed to pity a man who had the qualities of a pig." Elsewhere Casanova seems less concerned about what people will say, and declares that his sole purpose is to amuse himself with these memories of his gay past, as he sits in the library at Dux, alone, ailing, and cut off from the only activities which really interested him: the pursuit of women and of adventure.

The eighteenth century is peculiarly rich in memoirs of

all kinds: Restif de la Bretonne, Rousseau, Madame Roland, Duclos, Hamilton—all are mirrors of an age whose gaiety, freedom and spontaneity made it possible for colorful lives to be related colorfully, without prudish fears. Of those memoir writers none assuredly took life more easily, more carelessly than Casanova, and his reward is immortality. The most diverse commentators have saluted his Memoirs as the most vivid and valuable picture extant of eighteenth-century life. He went everywhere: Rome, Turin, Naples, Genoa, Trieste, Corfu, Constantinople, London, Paris, Madrid, Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Warsaw. He encountered every type of person: Frederick II, Catherine the Great, Pope Benedict XIV, George III, the Marquise de Pompadour. He is as interested in seducing an innkeeper's daughter as in discussing Italian literature with Voltaire. Cardinals, statesmen, cardsharpers interest him; he would as soon relate his flight from the Piombi prison in a respectable drawing-room as engage in an amorous intrigue with two nuns simultaneously. The sequel to his conversations with Voltaire is like a chapter from Straparole or Boccaccio.

Havelock Ellis has said: "Casavona has been described as a psychological type of instability. That is to view him superficially. A man who adapts himself so readily and so effectively to any change in his environment or in his desires only exhibits the instability which marks the most intensely vital organisms. The energy and ability which Casanova displayed in gratifying his instincts would have sufficed to make a reputation of the first importance in any department, as a popular statesman, a great judge, a merchant prince, and enabled him to die worn out by the monotonous and feverish toil of the senate, the court, or the counting-house. Casanova chose to *live*. A crude and barbarous choice it seems to us, with our hereditary instinct to spend our lives in wasting the reasons for living."

Nobody has written with more perfect appreciation of Casanova than the author of "The Dance of Life," a title which so aptly describes the spirit of these Memoirs. Casa-

nova was quintessentially of that eighteenth century which was swept away by the French Revolution, whose distant noise scarcely disturbed him in his retirement at Dux; that life was behind him and it mattered little to him that it would never return. The world in which he had lived well, if not wisely, "seemed none the worse," says Havelock Ellis, "for the apparent subsidence of Christianity; in the opinion of many it seemed to be very much better. The tolerant paganism of classic days appeared to be reasserting itself, robustly in England, with a delicate refinement in France,—setting the paganism of Watteau against the paganism of Fielding—while Goethe and the Germans generally were striving to rescue and harmonize the best of Christianity with the best of antiquity. European civilization was fully expanded; for a long time no great disturbing force had arisen, and though on every side the tender buds of coming growths might have been detected, they could not yet reveal their strength. Such a period certainly has its terrible defects; mellowness is not far from rottenness. But then youth also has its defects, and its crude acidity is still further from perfection."

In his delightful portrait of Casanova, whose name he strikingly couples with those of Stendhal and Tolstoy, Stefan Zweig presents the Venetian adventurer as representing the first and most primitive stage of self-portraiture: the naïve and ingenuous delight in life for life's sake, untroubled by psychological or religious introspection. That, in effect, is the singular fascination of these Memoirs, their complete freedom from moral or intellectual inhibitions. The exterior world alone exists for Casanova; he sees it as an adventure, a gamble, and pays the price of his follies with the same unconcern as he accepts his good fortunes. In all his travels he never once notes a landscape, or pauses to admire the effects of Nature. Human nature is his exclusive pleasure; the more people there are about him the happier he feels; the town rather than the country is his hunting ground. A dilettante of the arts and sciences, museums and picture

galleries do not detain him, for art, to him, is the servant of life, and exists only in so far as it enhances the charm of living.

This absence in him of introspective scruples coupled with the physical glamour and audacity of the man doubtless explain why recriminations never followed his encounters with women. He treated them all alike, and they all liked him. For this we have the evidence not only of the Memoirs themselves, which might be open to suspicion, but of the letters of the women, and the undeniable fact that he maintained the friendliest relations with so many of them after he had accomplished his purpose with them. He was not a libertine but a skilled lover. To quote Havelock Ellis again: "He sought his pleasure in the pleasure, and not in the complaisance, of the women he loved, and they seemed to have gratefully and tenderly recognized his skill in the art of love-making. Casanova loved many women, but broke few hearts. . . . That he knew himself well enough never to take either wife or mistress must be counted as a virtue, such as it was, in this incomparable lover of so many women. A man of finer moral fiber could scarcely have loved so many women; a man of coarser fiber could never have left so many women happy."

"My story," said Casanova, "is that of a bachelor whose chief business in life was to cultivate the pleasures of the senses," and he added his belief that people would be "curious to see what happened to a man who surrendered to his nature and whose great system consisted in not having any." Amongst his papers in the library at Dux many fragments were found in which he essayed to expound his philosophy of life and to justify his Memoirs. It is evident that, while he wrote primarily for his own amusement, he realized that his life offered a spectacle of universal interest and that it must be judged for what it was rather than what conventional morality would expect it to be. He quite frankly admitted and hoped that his delight in his own sins of the flesh would be shared by his readers. "People will say that a

book which offends virtue is bad. I admit it; and I confess that those whose favorite virtue is chastity, who shudder at the thought of the pleasure they had in love when young, who are revolted by amorous ecstasy and believe that it defiles the soul, had better refrain from reading me."

Casanova obviously understood human nature as the fascinating story of his life proves, and the enduring success of his Memoirs.

ERNEST BOYD.

NEW YORK,
May, 1929.

THE MEMOIRS OF JACQUES CASANOVA

CHAPTER I

HIS EARLY LIFE

Don Jacopo Casanova, born at Saragossa, illegitimate son of Don Francisco, carried off Donna Anna Palafox from her convent in the year 1428, the very day after she had taken the perpetual vows. He was King Alfonso's secretary. The lovers went to Rome, where they were imprisoned for a year, before Pope Martin the Third would grant a dispensation, and give the young couple the nuptial benediction. All the children born of this marriage died in infancy, except Don Juan, who joined Christopher Columbus, and died during his travels in 1493. He left one son, Mark Antony, a satirical poet, who was carried off by the plague during the sack of Rome by the Imperialists in 1536. Three months after his death his wife gave birth to a son, Jacques Casanova, who emigrated to France and there lived to be very old. He fought with Farnese against Henry of Navarre, and was my great-great-grandfather. Thus far I can establish my pedigree by aid of my father's papers, the rest I learnt from my mother.

Gaëtan Joseph Jacques fell in love with an actress named Fragoletta, and joined her troupe, first as dancer, then as comedian. After living together five years they parted, and he married a beautiful young Venetian, Zanetta, daughter of Jerome Farusi, a shoemaker opposite the theatre of Saint Samuel. This was in spite of the opposition of her family, in whose pious eyes an actor was an abomination. Nine

months after the marriage I was born, on the 2nd of April 1725.

My mother adopted her husband's profession and became an actress. When I was a year old, my parents left me in charge of my maternal grandmother, and went to London to play, where two years later my brother François was born: it was he who afterwards became the celebrated painter of battle scenes. My brother Jean was also born in London; he too had a talent for art, and was appointed Director of the Academy of Painting of Dresden. My youngest brother was a posthumous child: he took holy orders, and died in Rome about fifteen years ago.

The earliest fact my memory can furnish occurred in the year 1733. I was eight years old, and until then my mind is blank. I have a distinct recollection of standing in a corner of the room holding my head in my hands, while blood flowed abundantly from my nose and splashed in a pool on the floor. Marzia Farusi, my grandmother, whose pet I was, came to me and washed my face with cold water; then she took me with her in a gondola to Murano, a densely populated island about half a league from Venice. Here we landed, and walked some distance till we came to a miserable hut, in which was an old woman seated on a stool. She held a black cat in her arms, and five or six others purred round her. She was, I suppose, a witch. After a long discussion in Forliote patois, my grandmother gave her a silver ducat, whereupon the witch took me up and carried me across the room, depositing me in a huge chest which stood in a corner. She closed the lid and told me not to be frightened. I lay still, holding my handkerchief to my nose, which had not ceased bleeding. I could hear laughter, weeping, singing, screams, and cries, going on outside, but loss of blood and stupidity made me indifferent to the uproar. By and by the old woman lifted me out of the box, undressed me, and put me into her bed: she burnt drugs and muttered spells over me, rubbed my temples and the back of my neck with a sweet-smelling ointment, and gave me

five sugar-plums to eat. She told me I should get well, but only if I was careful not to tell any one what she had done to cure me; if I spoke of what had taken place, she said, I should most surely bleed to death. Moreover, a beautiful lady would come to see me on the following night, but I must not mention her visit. When we got home I was put to bed, where I soon fell asleep, thinking no more of the promised visitor, but on awaking some hours later I saw, or thought I saw, a lovely woman wearing a crown on her head, who spoke to me kindly, kissed me, and disappeared.

When my grandmother came to dress me in the morning she threatened me with all sorts of penalties, of which death was the least, if I dared to tell any one of the lady. As I was accustomed to obey her orders blindly, I kept my counsel; besides, there was really no one to whom I could have spoken, for I was a dull, uninteresting child, whom people pitied and left alone.

After the voyage to Murano and the nocturnal visit, my nose continued to bleed, but less and less violently every day, my faculties began to develop, and in a month I learned to read.

The next thing I remember is being with my brother François in my father's room. A large crystal lying on the table attracted my fancy, and I put it in my pocket. By and by my father got up to look for the crystal, and not finding it, he naturally accused us of taking it. My brother denied this, and so did I, whereupon my father said we should be searched, and the one in whose possession it was found should have a good beating. While pretending to hunt for the crystal in all the corners of the room, I slipped it adroitly into my brother's pocket. I regretted having done so, for I might have pretended to find it on the floor, but it was too late. The fatal ball was found on the innocent boy, and he got the punishment. Three or four years later I was fool enough to boast to François of the trick I had played him. He never forgave me, and never missed an opportunity of revenging himself. But my Jesuitical confessor told me

that in this action I had been true to my name, for in the Hebrew language Jacob means 'supplanter.'

Some few weeks after this my father died of an abscess in the head: he was only thirty-six, and was an especial favourite with the aristocracy. Two days before his death he gathered his children round his bed to say farewell. My mother was there, and three Venetian noblemen named Grimani; the latter promised solemnly to be our protectors and patrons. Having given us his blessing, my father made my mother swear that none of us should be brought up to the stage. The three patricians witnessed her vow, and undertook to see that she kept it. She was still young and beautiful, and after her husband's death had many offers of marriage, but she refused them all, trusting to Providence and her own resources to bring us up.

It was decided that I should be put to school at Padua, so my mother and the Abbé Grimani took me, aged nine, to that town in a *burchiello*, by the Brenta canal. A *burchiello* is like a little floating house. There is a dining-room, with a small cabin at each end, a kitchen, and rooms for the servants. We embarked at ten o'clock at night, and were eight hours on the water. At Padua, I was handed over, with my trunk and all it contained, to an old woman, who, for a sequin a month, agreed to board and lodge me, keep me clean, and send me to school. She grumbled at the sum, though she accepted it, and said it was not enough, at the same time eagerly pocketing her six months' pay in advance. I was kissed and told to be a good boy, and that is how they got rid of me.

My bed was in a garret, with those of three other boys, and the servant who looked after us. The old woman was as big and bony as a grenadier. My new companions received me kindly. When we sat down to dinner a wooden spoon was given me which I refused, calling out loudly for my pretty silver one, but I was told that at school I must do as the others did, and as they had wooden spoons I must be content with the like. The soup was not bad, but it was

served in a big bowl into which we all dipped, and he who dipped quickest got most. After the soup we had a bit of salt cod and an apple. We had no glasses or goblets, but drank from an earthenware pitcher a miserable beverage called *graspia*, which is made by boiling the stalks from which grapes have been stripped in water with a little sugar. After dinner the servant took me to see a young priest, Dr. Gozzi, who agreed to teach me in return for forty sous a month, the eleventh part of a sequin.

After school came supper, which was worse than dinner, and after supper I was put to bed, when the three best-known kinds of vermin prevented me from closing my eyes, while night was made additionally hideous by quantities of huge rats which ran about the floor and turned my blood cold with terror. Such was my first experience of misery, and my first lesson in fortitude and patience.

The next day I was so drowsy that I could not hold up my head, and kept dozing in school. The good priest wanted to know what was the matter with me, and on my telling him, he put on his cloak, took me by the hand, and led me back to the house, where he severely reprimanded my hostess. The result of his sermon was clean linen and a better bed for me.

My master was very kind. I sat by him in school, and tried hard to deserve his approbation.

It was a new life for me, who until then had known nothing outside my own home, where cleanliness and abundance reigned. Nevertheless, I grew and flourished, and had it not been for hunger I should have been fairly happy. To satisfy the gnawing I thieved right and left, and laid hands on whatever I could find. Some fifty red herrings in the kitchen cupboard disappeared one by one, and all the smoked sausages which hung in the chimney followed them. An egg was no sooner dropped in the poultry-yard than I seized and devoured it.

My progress at school was so rapid that in a few months it was my task to examine the lessons of my thirty com-

panions and to point out their faults to the master. I was very severe at first, but the lazy ones soon found means to soften my rigour; when their themes were full of faults they propitiated me with cold cutlets and pieces of chicken; they even gave me money. This excited my cupidity, or rather my gluttony, and I became tyrannical, with the result that they rebelled against me, and complained to the master, who convicted me of extortion, and deprived me of my functions.

The doctor, however, still continued to like me, and one day asked if I would care to leave the old woman and live with him. I was delighted at the proposition, and he told me to write to my grandmother and the Abbé Grimani for permission. Some time after this, just as we were sitting down to table, my good grandmother unexpectedly appeared. I flung myself into her arms, sobbing and crying, and at sight of the poor little skeleton I was, she mingled her tears with mine. In her presence my courage returned to me, and I told her all my grievances, pointing at the horrible food set before us, and taking her to see my miserable bed. The old woman declared she did the best she could for the money, and my grandmother only told her very quietly to pack my trunk. We went to the inn, and for the first time for many a day I had a real dinner. My grandmother hardly ate anything, she was so busy watching me.

Dr. Gozzi was a handsome young priest, about twenty-six years old. The family consisted of his mother, who looked on him as a prodigy, his father, a shoemaker who worked all day long, and never spoke even at meals, excepting on fête-days, when he conscientiously got drunk and came home at midnight singing songs from Tasso; and a sister, Bettina, a pretty girl of thirteen, a great reader of romances. Her father and mother scolded her continually because she spent all her time at the window, and her brother teased her for reading frivolous books. She was my first love. To her I owe the fact that I am slightly pitted with smallpox. I have three marks. I nursed her through the complaint, so they

are honourable scars enough. Six months after my *entrée* into the house the other scholars left, because the doctor devoted all his attention to me. He then determined to start a small school, but it was two years before it became a success; during these years he taught me all he knew, among other things to play the violin.

In the Lent of 1736, my mother sent for me, as she was going to Saint Petersburg, and wanted to see me. She invited the doctor to accompany me. This perturbed him greatly, as he had never been to Venice, and had never been in good company; however, he decided to go.

My mother received him most kindly, but as she was as beautiful as the day, my poor master was sorely embarrassed, not daring to look her in the face, and yet obliged to talk to her. She noticed his embarrassment and maliciously took pleasure in adding to it. As for me, I attracted the attention of the whole *coterie*, for as they had always considered me half an idiot, they could hardly believe in the change that had come over me in two years. Then my mother left for Saint Petersburg, and we returned to Padua, where I continued my studies. At sixteen I was received Doctor of Law. I wanted to study medicine with a view to practising, but was not allowed to. I was forced to study Law, which I hated, because my mother was determined I should be an advocate, and what was worse still, an ecclesiastical advocate. It would have been wiser to let me follow my own taste, and become a doctor, for in Medicine charlatanism is more useful than it is in Law. It ended in my being neither one nor the other, and moreover, I never made any use of one or the other. Law ruins more families than it helps, and more people perish at the hands of the doctors than are cured by them.

In my time the students of Padua enjoyed many privileges, the way of the Venetian Government was to pay well-known professors very highly and to leave the students absolute liberty to follow their lessons and lectures or not as they liked. The students were governed by a syndic, who

was responsible to the Government for their conduct. It was his duty to deliver them up to justice when they violated the laws, and the students submitted to his sentences, because whenever they had a show of reason on their side he was sure to defend them vigorously.

Not wishing to appear less rich than my comrades, I incurred all sorts of expenses which I could not meet. I sold or pawned everything I possessed, but was still unable to pay my debts. Not knowing what to do, I wrote to my good grandmother and asked for help, but instead of sending it me she came herself to Padua, and after thanking the doctor for his care of me, took me back with her to Venice. The doctor, with many tears, gave me his blessing, and the most precious thing he possessed, a relic of I forget what saint: perhaps I should have it now, only it happened to be set in gold. It got me out of a sore strait once, and that was the miracle it performed.

I have been to Padua many times since those days, and always lodged at the house of the good priest. My first love, the pretty Bettina, married a shoemaker, with whom she led such a miserable life of poverty and ill treatment that after two years of matrimony her brother took her back to live with him. The last time I went to Padua, which was a few years ago, I found her old, ill, and poor, and she died in my arms.

CHAPTER II

LUCY DE PASÉAN

'He comes from Padua, where he has been studying,' was the formula with which I was announced wherever I went, and which gained me the tacit admiration of my equals in age and condition, the compliments of the elders and the caresses of the old women. The curé of Saint Samuel, named Josello, presented me to the patriarch of Venice, who bestowed the tonsure on me, and four months later, by special graces, the four minor orders. My grandmother's joy knew no bounds.

Although the Abbé Grimani was my chief protector, I saw him but rarely, and I attached myself most particularly to a M. de Malipiero, a retired senator, who, in spite of his seventy years, led a merry life in his palace. Every evening a selection of all the best society in the town assembled there. He was rich, handsome, and a bachelor, but crippled by gout, his head, lungs, and stomach alone were free from this cruel malady. He made but one meal a day, and as he had no teeth and ate very slowly, he always ate alone, not wishing to hasten out of regard for his guests, or compel them to wait for him. The first time the curé presented me to him, we had a lively argument on the subject of his solitary dinners. I told him he ought to invite people with extra large appetites, which would keep them busy till he had finished.

'Where can I find them?' said he.

'It is a delicate matter,' I replied, 'but your excellency ought to try several people, and ask again those whom you find suitable, without telling them the reason, for of course no one would care to have it known that your excellency

does him the honour to invite him to your table on account of his appetite being twice as big as any one's else.'

The senator, struck by the force of my argument, bid the curé take me to dine with him next day, and having proved that my practice was still better than my precept, I became his constant guest.

This old man adored a girl called Thérèse Imer, a queer, pretty, coquettish creature. She knew Malipiero loved her and mocked him. Her mother brought her to see him every day after dinner. She used to refuse him a kiss, whereupon his gallantry turned to rage, and he had much ado to prevent himself throwing dishes at her head. She actually refused to marry him!

One day the Senator surprised me by telling me that he wished me to preach, or rather to pronounce a special panegyric, which was spoken once every year, on a certain feast-day. In his quality as President of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, it was his duty to select a preacher, and he had chosen me.

'They will not dare to refuse you,' he said, 'and this is a fine chance for you.'

I had never thought of preaching, and at first I thought he was joking, but he soon persuaded me that I was destined to be one of the finest orators of the century!

On the appointed day I read my panegyric in the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, before a most select audience. I was generously applauded, and every one declared I was a born preacher, certainly no boy of fifteen had ever spoken so well before. In the alms bag, in which it was customary to deposit offerings for the preacher, the sacristan found more than fifty sequins, and several *billets doux*, which latter scandalised him greatly. This rich harvest, coming when I was sorely in need of money, made me think seriously of taking up preaching as a profession, and I spoke of this to the curé, asking him to help me. The curé, who appreciated my maiden effort, commissioned me to write a sermon for the feast of Saint Joseph, but it was ordained that I should

only preach once in my life. My ambition was nipped in the bud.

I was puffed up with the pride of my first success, and I imagined that it was unnecessary to learn my sermon by heart. I had all the ideas in my head, and it seemed impossible for me to forget the order in which they were to be presented; even if I forgot a phrase, I was sure I could easily substitute another of equal value. I never lacked words even when talking in a numerous company, so I imagined it would be impossible for me to remain mute before a congregation of people, who, after all, would be obliged to listen to whatever I said.

I was to preach at four o'clock in the afternoon of the nineteenth of March, but unfortunately I had not the strength of mind to refuse an invitation to dine with the Count of Mont-Réal, who lodged in our house. I was still at table with him and his five friends when the clerk came running to tell me that they were waiting for me in the sacristy. With my stomach full, and my head also, I ran off to church, and ascended the pulpit. I got through the exordium very well, then paused for breath. I had hardly started again, when I began to stumble, lost the thread of my discourse, wandered, caught myself up, repeated myself, went back to the beginning, used a wrong word, and so on. What disconcerted me was a confused murmur, which began to rise audibly from the congregation, who saw only too plainly what was the matter with me. Several persons left the church; I heard suppressed laughter; I lost my head altogether, and I cannot say whether I really fainted or whether I only pretended to, anyhow I let myself fall on the floor of the pulpit, striking my head heavily against the wall. I wished then that the blow had killed me.

Two clerks carried me to the sacristy. As soon as I came to myself I caught up my cloak and hat and ran home, and locked myself into my own room. There I speedily exchanged cassock and bands for breeches and short coat, such as an abbé wears in the country, and putting some things

in a bag, I started for Padua, with the intention of passing my third examination.

When I returned to Venice some months later, my disgraceful performance was forgotten. The unfortunate affair had faded from people's minds, but there was no longer any question of my becoming a preacher.

In the autumn I received an invitation from the Countess of Mont-Réal to pass some time at a country place of hers called Paséan, where I was to meet a numerous and brilliant company, including her daughter, a Venetian lady, who had wit and beauty, but only one eye.

A charming room on the ground floor was allotted to me; it looked into the garden. The morning after my arrival, when I opened my eyes, they rested with delight on a beautiful girl who brought me my coffee. She seemed to be about seventeen, but in reality was three years younger. Her skin was as white as alabaster, and her hair and eyes as black as ebony; she wore nothing but a chemise and a short petticoat, showing a well-turned leg and the prettiest little foot imaginable.

'Was your bed comfortable?' she asked.

'Yes; and I am sure it was you who made it. Who are you?'

'I am Lucy. My father is the *concierge* here. I have no brothers nor sisters, and I am fourteen years old. I am glad you have not brought a servant with you, as I shall wait on you, and I hope you will be pleased with me.'

She helped me to put on my dressing-gown, and while I took my coffee she sat on the bed and chattered to me. By and by her father and mother came in; they scolded her gently for being so forward, and begged me to excuse her. When she left the room, they broke into praises of her goodness and gentleness. 'She is,' they said, 'our only child, and the hope of our old age. She loves and obeys us, and fears God. She is as healthy as a fish, and has only one fault; she is very young.'

While they were still talking of her, she returned, as gay

as a linnet, neatly dressed, with her hair arranged and her shoes and stockings on.

Every morning and evening she came to wait on me, and I was soon convinced from what she said that she was justly the idol of her parents, and that the freedom of her manner came from her innocence and the purity of her soul. Her naïveté, her vivacity, her curiosity, the modest blush which covered her face when the amusing things that she said, the full meaning of which she was far from understanding, made me laugh, all showed me that she was an angel of candour, but an angel who would most likely fall a victim to the first libertine who should attack her.

I felt myself strong enough to avoid anything which could afterwards give me cause for reproach; indeed, the thought of such villainy made me shudder. My *amour-propre* was sufficient guarantee for the honour of Lucy and of her worthy parents, who so confidingly trusted her to me. It seemed to me that I should have been contemptible in my own eyes if I had betrayed this confidence. I determined to struggle against all warmer feelings, and let her mere presence be my reward. I remained at Paséan all September, and the eleven last nights of my sojourn there I passed tranquilly and quietly in Lucy's society. As soon as her mother was asleep she would come to me, and talk to me, in all honour.

When I left I promised to return in the spring. Our parting was sad and tender; indeed, her perturbed and excited state of mind, due to my departure, was perhaps the cause of her misfortune, for which, twenty years later in Holland, I had reason to bitterly reproach myself.

When I returned to Paséan, after Easter, everything was changed; the guests were strangers to me, and the supper the first night seemed interminable. I was given my old room, and I hastened to it, eagerly expecting to see Lucy. As she did not appear, I consoled myself by saying, 'She will surely come in the morning.' But in the morning my coffee was brought by a stout, ugly old servant, who, when I asked

for news of the family, answered in a *patois* I did not understand.

By and by the *concierge* himself appeared. I asked after his wife and his daughter, but at this last word his eyes filled with tears.

'What,' cried I, 'is she dead?'

'Would to God she were!'

'Why do you speak so? What has happened to her?'

'She has eloped with Count Daniel's courier, and we do not even know where she is.'

His wife came in at that moment and joined her lamentations to his, and seeing that I sincerely shared in their grief, they told me it was but eight days since she had left them.

'I know the courier, l'Aigle,' said I, 'he is a scoundrel. Did he ask your permission to marry her?'

'Not he, for he knew we should never grant it.'

'But I cannot understand Lucy's caring for him!'

'He must have bewitched her. She first met him about a month after your departure.'

'Does no one know where they are?'

'No one; and God knows what the villain will do with her.'

Feeling every bit as sad as these honest folk could feel, I went out into the woods and spent a long morning in reflections, which all, good and bad alike, began with 'if.' 'If' I had arrived a week earlier, Lucy would have confided in me; 'if' I had not trifled with her she would have been less susceptible; 'if' she had never known me—! I was wretched, for I felt that I had been the agent of her misfortune. Had I known in what direction to look for her, I would have set off at once, but I had no clue to her whereabouts.

Before Lucy's fate was made known to me I was proud to think that I had had such control over myself, but now I was ashamed and repentant. I saw in my mind's-eye the unhappy girl falling into misery, perhaps shame, hating my memory as the primary cause of her trouble. This incident

it was which led me to adopt a new system, which I diligently pursued in after-life. I have never, since Paséan, had occasion to reproach myself with leaving victories behind me for others to reap, and, in some instances, I may have carried this new system too far. My readers will judge.

I joined the rest of the party. They flattered me, and made so much of me, that I felt cheerful again, and kept the whole table in a roar. I had to put my grief quite aside, or leave the place. I stayed.

CHAPTER III

CLERICAL ASPIRATIONS

On my return to Venice I found my grandmother very ill. I loved her, and I did not leave her for a single moment until she had breathed her last. It was not possible for her to leave me anything; she had given me all that she could during her lifetime. A month after her death my mother wrote saying that as there was no probability of her returning to Venice, she had decided to give up her house there. She had told the Abbé Grimani so, and I must conform to his will in everything. He was bidden to sell the furniture, and put me to some good school. I went at once to Grimani to assure him of my submission to his orders.

The rent of the house was paid up to the end of the year; but knowing that henceforward I should be homeless, and that the furniture would be sold, I did as I liked. I began by selling the linen, the hangings, and the china. I went on to the mirrors and beds. I knew I should get into trouble for this, but I also knew that these things were inherited from my father, and that my mother had no right to them. As far as my brothers and sisters were concerned, there was plenty of time for us to make arrangements. Four months later my mother wrote to me again, this time from Warsaw.

'I have, my dear son,' she wrote, 'made the acquaintance of a learned minor friar, a Calabrian, whose great qualities remind me of you each time he honours me with a visit. I told him about a year ago that I had a son destined for holy orders, but that I had not the necessary means to devote him to the Church. He said that if I would ask the queen to appoint him to a certain bishopric, my son should become as his own. I must ask the queen, he said, to recom-

mend him to her daughter, the Queen of Naples. The queen has deigned to listen to me, and to write to her daughter, and this most worthy ecclesiastic has now been raised to the see of Martorano;[1] and faithful to his promise, he will take you with him to his diocese. He must pass through Venice to go to Calabria. He has written you the enclosed letter, to which reply at once. By his help you may arrive at the highest dignities of the Church. Think what my joy will be if in twenty or thirty years' time I see you a bishop! The Abbé Grimani will take care of you until the bishop fetches you.'

The bishop's letter was in Latin, and was practically a repetition of my mother's.

These letters completely turned my head. Adieu, Venice! I saw before me a most brilliant perspective of years. I burned to start at once on my career. I felt no regret at the thought of leaving my country. 'The time for vanities is past,' said I, 'a stable and dignified future lies ahead of me.' The Abbé Grimani complimented me on my future grandeur, and assured me he would find me a good boarding-house, into which I could go at the beginning of the year, and wait until the coming of the bishop.

One fine morning, a man, about forty, appeared at my house with a black wig, a scarlet cloak, and a sunburnt face. He gave me a note from M. Grimani bidding me hand over to bearer all the furniture in the house, according to his inventory, a duplicate copy of which was in my possession. I showed him what was left of the furniture, and when anything was missing I told him, in an indifferent manner, that I knew where it was. But the blockhead insisted on knowing what I had done with the thing. His tone displeased me, and I told him I owed him no explanation. As he continued to bluster I advised him to get out as quickly as he could, or I would show him I was still master in my own house.

I went to M. Grimani, and told him all that had hap-

[1] Martorano is situated in the wilds of Calabria.

pened, but the man had been there before me, and I got a severe reprimand, and was asked what had become of the missing furniture. I had sold it, I said, so as not to run into debt. M. Grimani told me I was a scamp, that it was not mine to sell, that he should know how to deal with me, and ordered me out of the house. I ran off in a boiling rage, and bargained with a Jew to buy all that was left in the house, but when I got to my door I found the sheriff was there before me. Seals had been put on everything, and I was not even allowed to go into my own room. I went to a lawyer and laid the case before him.

'It is sharp practice,' said he, 'and I think you can make them pay dearly for it; the seals will be taken off to-morrow, and in the meantime you must sleep at a friend's house.'

As a matter of fact the seals were taken off the next morning. Two days after M. Grimani ordered me to wait on him immediately. When I presented myself he asked me brusquely what I intended to do.

'Put myself under the protection of the law,' I said, 'and defend myself against a man who has used violence, and forced me to spend the night in a disreputable house.'

'A disreputable house?'

'Certainly, there was none other open to me, and I was turned out of my own.'

'You are back again now. Go and tell your lawyer to stop all proceedings; the sheriff, Razzetta, was only acting by my orders. You were going to sell the rest of the furniture, we were obliged to prevent you. There is a room ready for you in a house which belongs to me, near Saint John Chrysostom; the first floor is occupied by La Tintoretta, the dancer. Send your baggage there, and come and dine with me every day.'

My lawyer advised me to do as M. Grimani said; it was an honour for me to be admitted to his table, and I was curious to see my new lodgings in La Tintoretta's house for she was a great deal talked about on account of the Prince of Waldeck, who spent large sums of money on her

La Tintoretta was a mediocre dancer, neither pretty nor ugly, but very intelligent. When I went to pay her my respects she received me like a princess, took off her glove and gave me her hand to kiss. The prince arrived while I was there, and was very gracious indeed. He was most kind to me all the time I remained in the house, and gave me a gold snuff-box as a reward for a very bad sonnet I made in honour of his Grizellini—this was her family name; Tintoretta was only a nickname bestowed on her because her father was a dyer.

Towards the end of the carnival my mother wrote to the Abbé Grimani, saying it would be a disgrace if the bishop found me lodging in the same house with a dancer, and that he must get me some more decent dwelling at once. He consulted with the curé Josello, and these two good gentlemen decided that a seminary was the very thing for me. It was an absurd idea, for at the age of seventeen a boy such as myself is out of place in a seminary; but as I was always eager for new sensations, I consented gladly. I was not destined to remain there long.

The students all slept in an immense dormitory divided into cells. A lay-brother, called the prefect, slept at the end of the dormitory, and it was his business to keep order, and above all to see that we did not enter one another's cells. This was a capital offence, and in consequence nothing delighted the *mauvais sujets* so much as to pay one another nocturnal visits. Returning in haste one night I was surprised to find another boy, not only in my cell, but in my bed. I kicked him out promptly, but the unfortunate wretch fell over a pail and made a terrible clatter. The prefect appeared, our names were taken, and there was a great to-do. It transpired the next day that the unlucky boy had been cruising about in the dormitory, when he heard, or thought he heard, the prefect. Laying his hands on my bed he found it empty, and jumped to the conclusion that he was safe in his own cell. But his explanations and mine were of no avail; we were haled before the rector, and

then, with our hands tied behind our backs, four domestics took us into the large hall, where we were told to kneel in front of the crucifix; and each received seven or eight blows from a stick.

Four days after, the curé Josello came with orders to take me back to Venice. He told me that the Abbé Grimani had given orders to his servant not to admit me if I presented myself at his palace; and he left me at the Jesuits' College without a sou in my pocket, and nothing but the clothes I stood up in. The next day as I was coming out of the library of Saint Mark a soldier accosted me, and said there was some one in a gondola who wished to speak to me. I stepped into the gondola, the curtain was drawn back, and I saw my evil genius the Sheriff Razzetta! The soldier sat down in the prow with a companion. I recognized the gondola as that belonging to Signor Grimani. No one spoke; for half an hour we maintained profound silence, then the gondola stopped at the small door of the Fort of Saint André at the mouth of the Adriatic, the very spot where the *Bucentaur* is brought to a standstill when the Doge goes in state to espouse the sea on the Feast of the Ascension.

The sentinel at the fort called a corporal, who took me to the officer in command, giving him at the same time a letter. I was led to the guard-room, where shortly after the adjutant appeared, and giving me three francs and a half told me he had orders to pay me that sum weekly: it was the exact amount received by a soldier of the lowest grade. I was too indignant to be angry. In the evening I sent for something to eat, then lying down on a camp bed I passed the night in the midst of the guard, without closing my eyes. They did nothing but sing, eat garlic, smoke bad tobacco, and drink wine as thick and as black as ink.

Next day the commandant summoned me, and said that in making me pass the night in the guard-room he had only obeyed the orders of the Minister of War. 'But now,' he said, 'I am simply told to keep you under arrest in the fortress, therefore I can give you a good room and a bed.

Go wherever you like within bounds, but remember if you escape, it will be the ruin of me. I am sorry to be only able to give you ten sous a day, but if you have friends in Venice write to them for money, and I will see that your letters reach their destination.'

I was then taken to a fine room on the first story, the windows of which commanded a superb view. I found a bed, and my trunk which had not been opened. A soldier came and told me politely that he would wait upon me, and that I was to pay him whenever I could; every one knew I had but ten sous a day. I sent him to bring me some soup, and after having eaten it went to bed and slept for nine hours. When I awoke I found an invitation to sup with the commandant, and I began to think that things were not so bad after all.

When the hot weather came I was obliged to write to Signor Grimani for summer clothes, telling him where he would find them, provided Razzetta had not sold them. Eight days after, when I was with the commandant, this infamous creature walked in accompanied by an individual whom he presented as Petrillo, a celebrated favourite of the Empress of Russia. Taking a packet from the hands of a gondolier, he gave it to me, saying, 'Here are your rags, which I bring you.'

I answered, 'The day will come when I shall give *you* your *rigano*.'[1]

Hereupon Petrillo struck in, saying he was sorry not to have seen me in Venice, as I could have shown him the way to all the low haunts in the city.

'We should doubtless have met your wife in one of them,' I replied.

I was beside myself with passion, and after they had left I considered my revenge.

The fort was entirely surrounded by water, and no sentinel could see me from the windows. The thing was to find a boatman who, for the sake of money, would risk the

[1] Convict's dress.

galleys. I chose one among those who brought provisions to the fort every morning, and offered him a sequin if he would help me to put a certain plan of mine into execution, at the same time assuring him I had no intention of escaping. He asked me to give him twenty-four hours to think over my proposition. During this delay he made inquiries about me, and ascertained that I was not in prison for any important misdemeanour, so he said I could count on him. The next night he was under my window, in a boat with a mast sufficiently long for me to slide down it. Wrapped in a boatman's cloak I went to Razzetta's house. I was told he was out. I sat down on a stone by the bridge, and just before midnight I saw him coming along the street. This was all I wanted to know; I went back to my boat, and at five o'clock next morning the whole garrison saw me walking on the ramparts.

Two or three days after this, when playing with the adjutant's son, I slipped and cried out that I had sprained my ankle: the surgeon examined it, and told me to keep quiet. So there I lay on my bed with my foot in a bandage, and every one came to see me. I had my servant to sleep in my room, and I made him dead drunk. At half-past ten I was in Venice, where I bought a thick stick, and then sat on a doorstep of a house by the Place Saint Paul, close to a very convenient little canal.

At a quarter to twelve I saw my man coming. Keeping in the shadow of the wall, I crept up behind him, and dealt him a violent blow on the head, another on the arm, and a third which knocked him into the canal; in falling he called out my name, a man came running up with a lantern, but I struck him on the hand and forced him to drop it; then taking to my heels I ran back to my boat, and in a quarter of an hour was in my room, and in bed. I awakened the soldier, and told him to fetch the doctor. I was dying of colic.

The next morning the commandant told me as a piece of good news that Razzetta had been attacked in the night,

and tumbled into the canal; his nose was broken, three teeth were knocked out, and his arm severely bruised.

Three days after a police commissary came to the fort and accused me of being the aggressor, but my alibi was easily proved. The chaplain, the doctor, the soldier, and several others swore that at midnight I was in my bed with a sprained foot, and tormented with such terrible colic that drugs had to be administered to me.

A few days later M. Grimani sent to inform me of the bishop's arrival. He was a fine handsome monk, about thirty-four years old, but it was impossible, he said, for him to take me with him. I must meet him at Rome; he questioned me for over three hours, and I saw plainly that I did not please him, though he pleased me.

A few days after this interview I embarked, with forty-two sequins in my purse, and plenty of courage in my heart. I was to go into quarantine at Ancona, and then a friend of the bishop's would give me his address in Rome, and money for my journey. At Chiozza, where we made a stoppage of two or three days, I had the misfortune to meet a one-eyed Jacobin monk whom I had known in Venice, and who introduced to me some friends of his as dishonest as himself. We played at faro, and I lost every sol I possessed. I pawned the contents of my trunk to a money-lender for thirty sequins, on condition that if in three days I did not redeem them, they were to become his property; like the young fool that I was, I went about clamouring for revenge, flinging good money after bad. At last I lost the last of the thirty sequins, and should certainly have starved on the boat, had it not been for a young Franciscan friar, who persuaded me to go ashore with him at Orsara, and dine at the house of a pious lady of his acquaintance.

For two days we got along very well. At the village of Soma, the mistress of the inn gave us a good dinner and some excellent Cyprus wine, which she told us the couriers from Venice brought her in exchange for truffles, which they sold dear on their return. Imagine my indignation when

two miles from Soma the infamous monk showed me a little sack of truffles which he had stolen from our hostess in return for her hospitality. The truffles were worth at least two sequins. I tore the sack out of his hands, telling him I would send it back. As he would not listen to this we came to blows, and having knocked him down and taken away his stick, I left him. At the next village I wrote a letter of apology to the fair hostess, with whom I had left a portion of my heart, and sent back the truffles.

I arrived in the oldest capital in the world with seven paoli in my pocket. Thus sadly equipped, I cared nothing for the beauties of Rome, but I went straight towards Monti-Magnanopoli, where I was to find my bishop. I was told he had gone away ten days before my arrival, leaving instructions and money for me to follow him to Naples.

A coach left the next day. Not caring to do any sight-seeing I engaged a seat in it, and stayed in bed until the time for my departure. I arrived at Naples on the 6th of September, only to learn that my bishop had proceeded to Martorano. He had left no instructions for me, no one knew anything about me. I was alone in the immense city, with no acquaintances, and very little money. No matter, my destiny called me to Martorano, and to Martorano I would go; it was only two hundred miles! The coaches would not take me as I had no luggage, unless I paid in advance, so I determined to set off on foot, begging my food and lodging like Brother Stephano. My first halt was at Portici, where I came after walking an hour and a half. My legs and my head were tired; I determined to spend a quarter of my capital on a good dinner and a good bed. Then I would consider!

CHAPTER IV

THE BISHOP OF MARTORANO

THE next morning, having told my host I would be back to dinner, I set out to visit the royal palace. As I was standing at the entrance a pleasant-faced man in Eastern dress came up to me and said that, if I wanted to see the palace, he would show me over it, as he knew it well, and that by going with him I should save a guide's fee. In the course of conversation I told him I was a Venetian, and he said in that case he was my vassal, as he came from Zante.

'I have some excellent Levantine muscat I could sell you cheap,' he said.

'Perhaps I might buy some,' I answered as loftily as though my pockets were full of gold, 'but I am a connoisseur.'

'So much the better. I have some wines of Samos and Cephalonia also. Come and dine with me, and taste them. I have a quantity of minerals, vitriol, cinnabar, antimony, and a hundred quintals of mercury.'

'I might buy some mercury,' said I thoughtfully.

It is only natural that a young fellow unused to poverty should try to appear richer than he is by talking of his means; but while thus talking it had suddenly occurred to me that the amalgamation of mercury with lead and bismuth produces an increase of one-quarter in bulk. I wondered if the Greek merchant knew this secret.

He took me to his inn, and in his private room I saw four bottles of mercury, each weighing about ten pounds. I was ready with my scheme. I bought a bottle of mercury, and took it away. The Greek had business to transact, and went out, after saying we would meet at dinner. I ran at once to

a druggist and bought two pounds and a half of lead, and as much bismuth. We dined gaily, and while drinking his excellent muscat, he asked me why I had bought the mercury.

'You shall see,' I replied.

I showed him his mercury divided into two bottles. I begged a chamois-skin, and having filtered it, filled the original bottle, while he stood open-mouthed at sight of what amounted to a quarter of a bottle of fine mercury remaining over and above the original amount. I called in the servant, and sent him to sell the surplus mercury to the druggist, and he returned with fifteen carlins. The Greek could not get over his surprise.

We supped together, and he said laughingly that I ought to stay over the next day to make forty-five carlins out of the remaining mercury. I replied in an offhand way that I had no need of money, and had only increased the bulk of the mercury to surprise and amuse him.

'You must be very rich.'

'No, for I am working with a view to increase gold in the same way, and it entails very costly experiments.' I saw I had piqued his curiosity and cupidity. He came to my room at break of day. I received him cordially, and invited him to take his coffee with me.

'Tell me,' said he, 'will you sell your secret?'

'I will consider it; and when we meet at Naples——'

'Why not here, to-day?'

'I am expected at Salerno, and besides, the secret is a costly one, and I do not know you.'

'That is no reason—I can pay ready money. How much do you want?'

'Two thousand ounces.' [1]

'I will give them you, on condition that you teach me to multiply the bulk of the thirty pounds of mercury I have here.'

After some discussion he drew up a written agreement, in

[1] An ounce is worth about thirteen francs French money.

which it was stipulated he should pay me two thousand ounces on learning from me the ingredients and the manner by which he could increase mercury one-quarter without deterioration, and that it should be equal in quality to that which I had sold in his presence at Portici.

He gave me a bill of exchange for the sum agreed upon, drawn at eight days on a well-known banker, and I told him the ingredients were lead and bismuth; the first has a natural affinity for mercury, and the second renders the mass fluid enough to pass through a chamois skin. The Greek went off to try the experiment, and I dined alone. In the evening he came back, saying, in a melancholy tone: 'The experiment is made, but the mercury is not perfect.'

'It is as perfect as that I sold for you at Portici, which is what you demanded in the agreement.'

'But in the agreement it also says "*without deterioration.*" '

'Do you know the secret or not? Should I have told it you except on those terms? We will go to law about it, and if you win you can congratulate yourself on having got my secret for nothing. In the meantime here are the fifty ounces you gave me on account——'

I laid them on the table in a dignified manner, though I was dying with fear lest he should take me at my word, but he refused to touch them. That night we supped at separate tables; we were at open war, but I felt sure that we should become friends again.

The next morning he came in just as I was leaving. I once more offered him his money back, but he told me to keep it, and that he would give me fifty more ounces if I would return him his bill of exchange. After arguing for two hours I gave in, and we dined together and parted the best of friends. He gave me an order on his warehouse in Naples for a barrel of muscat, and a superb case containing twelve silver-mounted razors.

I stopped two days at Salerno to set myself up with linen and other necessaries. I had a hundred sequins, I was in

good health, my natural gaiety had returned; I was glad to be able to appear before the bishop in proper style. I left Salerno with two priests who were going to Cosenza, and we did the hundred and forty-two miles in twenty-two hours.

The day after my arrival in the capital of Calabria I took a little carriage, and drove out to Martorano. I was glad to find myself in glorious Greece, and was prepared to be enthusiastic over Pythagoras, who abode there twenty-four centuries ago. I found my bishop, Bernard de Bernardis, writing at a rickety table. I knelt down according to custom, but he raised me and gave me his benediction. He was sincerely grieved when I told him of my misfortunes, and delighted when I added that I was well, and indebted to no one. The *personnel* of the episcopal palace consisted of one man-servant who waited, and the most canonical of housekeepers. The house was large, but ill built and ill kept. The dinner was execrable; it was a fast day, and the oil was rancid. The bishop was a man of great intelligence; he seemed mortified at the poorness of his establishment, and was probably painfully conscious of the doubtful benefit he had conferred on me in taking me into his household. He told me his only cause for satisfaction was his escape from the clutches of the monks, whose persecutions had kept him in purgatory for fifteen years.

The next day he officiated at Pontifical High Mass, at which were assembled all the clergy and the notabilities of the town. I have never seen such a troop of brutes, such hideous women, such stupid and vulgar men. On returning to the palace I told the bishop that I had no desire to die here, in his melancholy see, a martyr to *ennui*. 'Give me,' I added, 'your blessing and my *congé*, and let me go; or rather come with me, and I promise you we will make our fortunes elsewhere.'

This proposition amused him so that he laughed at it at intervals throughout the day. Had he accepted it he would not have died two years later in the prime of his age. He

owned that he had made a mistake in sending for me; as he had no money (his revenue was about two thousand francs a year), and not aware that I had any, he gave me a letter to a friend at Naples, who was to pay me sixty ducats. I accepted this with gratitude, and taking from my trunk the case of razors the Greek had given me, I begged him to accept them as a souvenir.

Thus I left Martorano three days after my arrival. I had five travelling companions, whom, from their appearance, I judged to be corsairs, or professional thieves, so I took good care not to let them know my purse was well lined. I also always slept fully dressed, which is a precaution every young man should take when travelling in that very unsatisfactory country.

I arrived at Naples on the 16th September 1743, and at once delivered the letter of introduction the bishop had given me. Gennaro Polo, to whom the letter was addressed, not only paid the money, but kept me with him as companion to his son. After some weeks' sojourn with this charming family I travelled with them to Rome. They paid all my expenses, and I arrived in the Eternal City well dressed, with a tolerably well-filled pocket, some fine jewels, a certain amount of experience, and good letters of introduction, perfectly free, and at an age when a bold man can count on fortune if he has a personal appearance calculated to dispose others to regard him with favour. I possessed a something which is better than looks, a certain *je ne sais quoi* which gains attention and civility. I knew that Rome is the only city in the world where a man who starts with nothing may arrive at everything.

I had a letter for Father Georgi, a learned monk, esteemed by all Rome, even by the Pope himself, perhaps on account of his dislike for the Jesuits. I had also a letter for Cardinal Acquaviva, who was then all-powerful. His Eminence received me kindly, and asked if I had paid my homage to the Holy Father: on my replying that I had not yet had an opportunity of doing so, he promised to obtain an

audience for me. In a few days I was notified that I might present myself to the Pope. I went to Monte-Cavallo, and was taken straight to the room where his Holiness was. He was alone, I prostrated myself and kissed the cross on his slipper. The Holy Father asked me who I was, and when I told him my name, he said he had heard of me. He congratulated me on being protected by such an important cardinal as Acquaviva, and questioned me as to my adventures; he laughed heartily when I told him about the poor good Bishop of Martorano. I felt perfectly at ease with him, and told him many things which amused him so much that he was pleased to say he should always be glad to see me. I asked his permission to read all the forbidden books, and he accorded it to me, promising that he would send it me in writing, which he forgot to do.

Benedict the Fourteenth [1] was amiable, and loved a joke. I saw him a second time at the Villa Médicis. He called me to him, and while walking about, spoke to me of many things of no importance. I asked him to dispense me from abstinence, which he did, at the same time giving me a special benediction. Having had the good luck to write some verses that pleased the Cardinal S. C., I became a frequent visitor at his palace and he gave me a superb snuffbox in gold enamel, and several other costly presents. My friends, seeing that I had gained such protectors, predicted the highest fortunes for me. In a short time my position in Rome became truly brilliant, but I was not destined to enjoy it long. One morning, it was Christmas Day, I remember, a friend of mine, a young doctor, came into my room, and flinging himself on the couch told me he had come to bid me farewell, but that, before parting from me for ever, he wished me to give him one last piece of advice. He drew a letter from his pocket and told me to read it. It was from his mistress, a young girl of good family, whose father was

[1] Benedict XIV. was of so mild and conciliatory a disposition that his bitterest enemies were forced to admire and respect him. Voltaire condescended to dedicate to him his tragedy of *Mahomet*.

sternly opposed to their union. In it the unfortunate girl told him that it had now grown impossible for her to conceal their intercourse longer, and that rather than brave her father's wrath she was determined to fly from Rome, out into the cold world, alone and on foot.

'If you are an honourable man,' said I, 'you will not abandon her; you must marry her in spite of her father and yours; Providence will take care of you.' I talked and reasoned with him for a long time, and by and by he grew calmer. He left me saying he would never desert his sweetheart. One evening in the beginning of January, as I was preparing for bed, the door of my room was flung open, and a young abbé, breathless and flushed, rushed in. In spite of the disguise I immediately recognised Barbara Dalacqua, the doctor's sweetheart. She threw herself at my feet and begged me to have pity on her. What heart so hard as to remain untouched by the prayers and tears of a pretty and unfortunate woman!

'Where is your lover the doctor?'

'The police have taken him. I was on my way to join him, dressed as you see, when I saw them thrusting him into a carriage. I felt that my turn would come next, and that I was surely lost unless I could find some safe hiding-place. I obeyed my first impulse and came to you.'

'My poor girl,' I said, 'it is now midnight; when morning breaks what do you propose to do?'

'I will leave the house,' she sobbed. 'In these clothes no one will recognise me; I will leave Rome, and I will walk straight before me until I fall dead of fatigue.'

I made her lie down on my bed, and early in the morning I went out, intending to go to her father and beseech him to forgive her; but I saw that I was followed, and I turned into the café, and, as calmly as I could, ordered some chocolate. As I was staying in Cardinal Acquaviva's house, I foresaw the trouble and disgrace which would come on me if the police should institute a search. On returning to my room I induced the poor prisoner to swallow a biscuit and a little

wine, and then advised her to write to the cardinal and intreat him to grant her an interview. She wrote, in French, the following words:—

'I am an honest girl, Monseigneur, although masquerading in the disguise of an abbé. I implore your Eminence to let me tell you my name in person. I hope that in the greatness of your soul you will come to my assistance, and save my honour.'

'Tell him all, keep back nothing,' said I. 'I am sure he will devise some means of helping you.'

As soon as the letter was despatched, I left her to go to the barber's. I was only absent an hour, but when I returned to my room she had disappeared. I dined with the cardinal, but though I maintained a discreet silence I gathered from the remarks made at table, that his Eminence had taken poor Barbara under his protection. For two days I was without news of her, then I learnt that Acquaviva had placed her, at his expense, in a convent, where she was to remain until she could leave it to become my friend's wife. Unfortunately for me, the affair did not end here, the actors in the drama were too well known for it to escape attention. In a few days it became the talk of Rome, and there were not wanting malicious tongues to insinuate that I had motives of my own in coming to Barbara's aid. I took small notice of this gossip, but what troubled me was that the cardinal became less cordial to me.

At the beginning of Lent he sent for me, and said in a very grave voice: 'My dear friend, the Dalacqua affair is becoming exceedingly tiresome. People are saying that you and I have profited by her folly and her lover's lack of experience. In spite of my contempt for scandal, I cannot brave it too openly, and I feel myself obliged to ask you to leave Rome. I will find you an honourable pretext, and will continue to show you all possible marks of my interest and esteem. You are young, and should travel. Think what coun-

try you would most like to visit. I have friends all over the world, and will give you letters which will insure your employment wherever you may decide to go. Get ready to leave Rome in a week. Think matters over seriously, come and see me to-morrow, and tell me what you determine to do.'

I left him, troubled and sore at heart. I could think of no course to pursue, and when I saw him next day, at the Villa Negroni, had made no definite plan.

He was walking in the gardens with one of his secretaries, whom he dismissed on seeing me.

I told him in the strongest terms the grief I felt at leaving him. He listened kindly, but repeated his question as to what part of Europe I wanted to go to. At last, in temper and despair, I answered: 'Constantinople.'

'Constantinople!' he exclaimed.

'Yes, Monseigneur,' I repeated, wiping my eyes.

After a little silence he said with a smile: 'I must thank you for not saying Ispahan, it might have been embarrassing; I will give you a full passport, and I think you can safely tell people I am sending you to Constantinople; no one will believe you.'

When I returned to the hotel I said to myself: 'Either I am mad, or in the power of some occult genius who controls my destiny; I do not know what I shall do at Constantinople—but to Constantinople I mean to go.'

Two days after the cardinal gave me a passport to Venice and a sealed letter addressed to Osman Bonneval, Pasha of Caramania, at Constantinople. He also gave me a parcel containing seven hundred sequins. I already possessed three hundred, and I took my place in a berline with a lady and her daughter, who were going on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loretto. The girl was ugly, and I had a very tiresome journey.

CHAPTER V

THE FALSE BELLINO

I GOT safely to Ancona, and went to the best inn. When I told the host I wanted meat for supper, he replied it was Lent, and that in Lent all Christians fasted.

'The Holy Father has given me permission to eat meat.'

'Show it me.'

'He gave it me verbally.'

'I am not obliged to believe you.'

'You are an impudent fellow.'

'I am master in my own house, and if you are not satisfied I beg of you to go elsewhere.'

This reply put me beside myself with rage. I swore, I cursed, I yelled, when suddenly a grave-looking personage entered the room and began to harangue me. After trying to convince me that I was in the wrong from beginning to end, he added, 'I will now go and appease the host, and I am sure he will give you an excellent supper.' He returned soon saying that everything was arranged. He told me his name, Sancio Pico, a Castilian, and purveyor to the Spanish army. I told him I was secretary to Cardinal Acquaviva, and we supped together.

'If you would like to hear some excellent music,' said he after supper, 'come into the next room, the principal actress in Ancona is lodging there.'

Pricking up my ears at the word actress, I followed him. A woman of a certain age was seated at a table with two young girls and two boys; one, the taller, was about seventeen years old and wonderfully handsome. He doubtless played the leading lady, as was the custom in Rome. The younger son was handsome too, but more manly-looking.

The girls, aged eleven and twelve, were both pretty; one was studying music and one dancing.

This family came from Bologna. They lived by their wits, and what was lacking them in wealth they made up in gaiety and good humour.

Bellino, as the elder boy was called, sat down to the harpsichord and sang like an angel. The Castilian closed his eyes with very enjoyment, but I kept mine open and watched those of Bellino flashing fire as he sang.

The next afternoon I went to pay my respects to the mother, and to ask the family to sup with me. She grew confidential, and told me that they were in a difficult position.

'We have spent all our money,' she said, 'and will have to return to Bologna on foot and begging our bread.'

I drew out of my purse a gold piece, and laid it on the table.

'I will give you another, madame,' I said, 'in return for a little piece of confidence. Tell me, is not Bellino a girl in disguise?'

'No, indeed—though I admit he has the look of one.'

'The look and the voice, madame, I know what I am talking about.'

'You are mistaken nevertheless.'

On the stairs I met Cecile, the youngest child. Catching her by the arm, I said. 'If you want to earn six sequins, tell me the truth: is not Bellino your sister and not your brother?'

'I cannot tell. But Bellino must be my brother, otherwise he would not be allowed to act here.'

Don Sancio invited us all to supper with him the following night, and gave us a magnificent repast. The table was covered with silver plate and the servants were in full livery. We had white truffles, shell-fish of many kinds, the best fish from the Adriatic, still champagne, peralta, xeres, and pedro ximénès. After supper Bellino sang in a manner calculated to completely overthrow what little reason the wine of the magnificent Spaniard had left us. Expression, manner, ges-

ture, physiognomy, voice, but above all my own instinct, made me feel I could not be mistaken as to the sex of the singer, besides, on this occasion, either from taste or caprice, Bellino chose to dress as a woman, and a more charming and beautiful woman I have never seen.

Reader, you have guessed what is coming, but you shall hear from Bellino's own lips the story, which he, or rather she, told me, when, after many days of torturing doubt and anxiety, she not only confided her sex to me, but made another, and far sweeter avowal, in return for my passionate protestations of love.

'My name,' she said, 'is Teresa. My father was a poor employé at the Institute, in Bologna. He had as a lodger in his house the celebrated musician Salimberi, who was young and handsome, but maimed. He became attached to me. I was only twelve years old and was flattered by his attention. He proposed to teach me music, and as I had a fine voice he took trouble with me; in a year I could accompany him on the harpsichord. Affection ripened into love, we adored each other. No doubt a man, such as you are, Casanova, feels himself infinitely superior to such a poor creature as Salimberi, but he was exceptionally gifted. His beauty, his wit, his talents, and the eminent qualities of his heart rendered him in my eyes preferable to any one else. He was modest and discreet, besides being rich and generous. I doubt if many women could have resisted him. Yet I never heard him boast of his triumphs. Before he knew me he had adopted a boy about my age, and had placed him with a family at Rimini, where he was being educated for the musical profession. The boy's name was Bellino.

'The father of this boy fell ill, and when he saw that death was approaching, and as he had made no provision for his other numerous children, he determined to cultivate this boy's voice so that he could support his brothers and sisters. The boy was called Bellino, the woman I live with now was his mother. About a year ago Salimberi told me, weeping, that he must leave me and go to Rome. The prospect of

parting was the more terrible as my father had died and I was an orphan without resources. I implored Salimberi not to desert me, and moved by my sorrow he determined to take me to Rimini, and put me with the master who was bringing up his young protégé. Imagine his grief when on arriving at Rimini he heard Bellino was dead! Reflecting on what the loss of this boy would mean to his mother, the idea occurred to Salimberi to take me to Bologna in his place, the mother, being poor, would keep the secret. "I will give her," he said, "the means to complete your instruction, and in four years I will take you to Dresden" (he was in the service of the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland), "but you must not come as a girl. There we can live together without any one being the wiser. Bellino's mother will be the only one in the secret, for the other children, not having seen their brother since they were infants, will never guess. But if you love me you must renounce your sex for ever, and let no one know what you really are."

'He arranged matters with Bellino's mother. When I went to her house she embraced me and called me her dear son. The time had now come for Salimberi to leave me; people laugh at presentiments, but I tell you, when he bade me farewell I felt the shiver of death run through me. I fainted. Alas! my presentiment was but too true—he died a year ago in the Tyrol. My adopted mother advised me to continue my boyish *rôle,* hoping that in Rome I should get a good engagement. I consented. Her son Petronius is now dancing at Ancona as a girl, so we are verily the world turned upside-down. It rests with you to restore me to my feminine condition and to take from me the name of Bellino, which I detest and have no need for now that my protector is dead. It is a source of endless embarrassment to me. I have only as yet sung at two theatres, where, fortunately for me, the censors were old priests, who contented themselves with summary inquiries, but another time I may not get off so easily. The tenderness you have inspired me with is genuine, that which I felt for Salimberi was the

result of my extreme youth and my gratitude. You have made a woman of me.'

'Give up,' said I, 'the engagement which you have at Rimini. We will stop two days in Bologna, and then you shall come to Venice with me, dressed as a girl and under another name. I defy the manager of the opera here to discover you.'

'Your will shall be mine. I give myself to you without reserve.'

The story she told me, her talent, her candour, her delicacy, her misfortunes, all increased my love for her. I decided to give our union the sanction of law and religion, and to make her my wife, for according to the theories I then upheld, I should by so doing increase our mutual tenderness and esteem, and gain the respect of society.

Teresa's talents would supply us with the means of existence until I could put my own to some account; and although I had no idea what pursuit I should follow, I felt confident of succeeding in any I might choose. But in the meantime she would have too great an advantage over me. Our mutual love might weaken, and certainly my *amour-propre* would suffer if we depended on her talent alone. In the long-run it might change the nature of our feeling for each other. My wife might come to consider herself the protector instead of the protected, in which case I felt that my love for her would change to contempt. I determined to sound her before taking the important step.

'My beloved Teresa,' I said, 'I must speak to you quite openly. You must understand the position we are in. I know you, but you do not know me. In the first place, you think I am rich. I am not; as soon as my purse is empty I shall be at an end of my resources. You think, perhaps, that I am well born, but my position is no better, if not worse, than your own. I have no lucrative talent, no employment, no certainty of having anything to live on a few months hence. I have no relations, no friends, no claim on any one, and no solid prospects for the future. I have youth, health,

courage, intelligence, and some small literary pretensions. I am afraid of nothing, and I am inclined to be extravagant. There's your man, beautiful Teresa. Now choose!'

'First of all, my friend,' she replied, 'let me tell you that is no news to me. I made a tolerably accurate estimate of you when I first met you. But do not let the future trouble you. Love me and be true to me. Let us go to Venice where I can earn enough for both. Later on we will see what you can do.'

'But I must go to Constantinople.'

'We will go together, but let me go as your wife.'

'It shall be so. The day after to-morrow at latest, my beloved, I will pledge you my faith at the steps of the altar. I desire that you should be bound to me, that we should be bound one to another by the most indissoluble bonds.'

Alas, for the good resolutions of youth! We started for Bologna the next day, and stopped at Pesaro for breakfast. Just as we were stepping into the carriage an officer with two fusiliers presented himself and demanded our names and our passports. Teresa had hers, but I sought in vain for mine.

The officer ordered the postillion to wait while he made his report. Half an hour after he returned saying that Teresa might continue her journey, but that I must remain, he had orders to take me before the commandant.

'What have you done with your passport?' asked this personage.

'I have lost it.'

'One can't lose a passport!'

'One can, for I have lost mine.'

'You cannot go on without one.'

'I have come from Rome. I am going to Constantinople with despatches from Cardinal Acquaviva: here they are, sealed with his arms.'

'All that I can do is to put you under arrest until a fresh passport comes to you from Rome. Only careless people lose

their passports, and this will teach the cardinal not to give them commissions.'

I was taken back to the inn, where I wrote to the cardinal, begging him to send me a fresh passport at once. I sent the letter off by express. I kissed Teresa and told her to go on and wait for me at Rimini. I made her take a hundred sequins. My personal baggage was removed from the carriage, and I was led to the guard-house at Sainte Marie, outside the town. At such times the most determined optimism is at fault, though stoicism may wear an unmoved front in the face of reverses. The sight of Teresa's tears grieved me most, though she tried hard to restrain them. She would not have left me if I had not persuaded her that it was impossible for her to remain at Pesaro, and that in ten days at farthest I should rejoin her. But fate willed it otherwise. The night that I spent on the straw in the guard-room at Pesaro taught me a lesson of prudence. The odds are a hundred to one that a young man who has lost his purse or his passport once will never again lose the one or the other. Both these misfortunes had now befallen me, they never happened again.

The officer who happened to be on guard that night was a sulky Castilian who did not even deign to answer when spoken to; he was relieved in the morning by a Frenchman of a totally different character. I must say here that the French have always had an attraction for me, the Spaniards never. The French are so polite, so obliging, one feels drawn towards them at once, while the Spaniards have an unbecoming pride which makes them repellent to strangers; yet I am bound in justice to add that I have more than once been taken in by a Frenchman, but never by a Spaniard: it is not always safe to trust one's first impressions.

The French officer, having listened to the story of my adventures, procured me a bed, a table and chairs; he also placed a soldier at my disposal, and the nine or ten succeeding days of my captivity I passed in tolerable comfort. I became acquainted with the whole corps, and I could walk

about freely so long as I remained within sight of the sentinel; then the most singular accident of my life happened to me. I was walking about outside the guard-room one fine morning, not more than a hundred paces or so from the sentinel, when an officer rode up. He dismounted, and throwing his bridle on the horse's neck, left it standing by me. I began to pat and admire the beast, then, without the slightest thought of consequences, I put my foot in the stirrup and vaulted on to its back. I had never been astride a horse before. I do not know if I touched it with my cane or my heels, but all of a sudden it started off at a round gallop, one foot was out of the stirrup, and I was clinging on for dear life. The sentinel shouted to me to stop; I would have obeyed him willingly had I been able, but the fatal beast only went faster and faster. They fired after me, and I heard the balls whistle past my ears; on and on he dashed till we reached the outposts of the Austrian army, then some one stopped my horse, and, thank God, I was able to alight!

An officer of hussars came up and asked me where I was going so quick. In speech as prompt as my thought I replied that I could only explain my conduct to Prince Lobkowitz, who was in command of the army, and whose headquarters were at Rimini, where my runaway horse had brought me.

His Royal Highness received me in his tent, and I told him quite simply what had happened. He laughed, but I could see he did not believe me. He called up one of his aides-de-camp and ordered him to conduct me outside the gates of Cesena.

'Once there, reverend sir, you can go where you like,' said he, 'but take care not to show yourself here again without a passport.'

I asked him to give me back the horse, but he said it did not belong to me.

On our way to the city gate we entered a café to take some chocolate. I told the officer my name and how I came to be at Rimini; he told me I could go to Bologna, get a

passport there which would take me back to Pesaro, where I could get my trunk and pay the officer whose horse it was.

I had money and jewels on me, but I wanted my trunk. Teresa was at Rimini, and I was forbidden to set foot in that town.

It was raining. I was in silk stockings and a fine laced coat. I stopped to shelter in the porch of a church, and asked a peasant who was sheltering there also if he could get me a carriage, and he went off in search of one. Before he returned a string of mules came by on their way to Rimini; as they passed I mechanically laid my hand on the neck of one, and keeping step with the animal, I re-entered the town without any one paying the slightest attention to me. I presented myself at Teresa's door in a strange plight: a nightcap was pulled over my hair, my hat on the top of that, my gold-mounted stick hidden under my coat, which I had turned inside out. In spite of her joy at seeing me she was terrified at the risk I was running, and made me promise to leave for Bologna as soon as possible.

I spent the day with my sweetheart. Having bribed the muleteer to let me pass as one of his men, I left with him at dusk, and arrived safely at Bologna, where I was obliged to wait until my passport came from Rome. I had to have some new linen and clothing made, and this led me to think seriously of the future. The calling of ecclesiastic had become so distasteful to me, that I decided to fling my cassock to the winds, and assume in its stead a military uniform. Such a decision was only natural at my age, and especially as I had been living between two armies, where the military habit alone imposed respect. La Mort, a tailor, took my measure, and in two days I was transformed into a disciple of Mars. I furnished myself with a long sword, a black cockade, and a false pigtail. I remember now how agreeably myself impressed me as I stood before a looking-glass. My uniform was white with a blue vest, and a gold and silver shoulder knot. I was pleased with my own appearance, and I strutted about the town, read the gazette at the café,

and replied in soldierly monosyllables to any one who dared address me.

Four days after my arrival at Bologna I received a long letter from Teresa. She told me that the Duke of Castropignano had offered her a thousand ounces a year, and all her expenses paid, if she would sing at his theatre at San Carlo. She had demanded a delay of eight days to consider, and wrote to ask what I wished her to do.

For the first time in my life I had to ponder deeply before taking a resolution. Two powerful motives held the scales equal, love and pride. How could I part from my sweetheart? How could I return with her to Naples, where I was so well known, in the character of a coward living on his wife or his mistress? What would all my noble friends think of me? If I were to feel myself despised, even my love for Teresa would not have consoled me. I hit on an expedient which would at least give me time. I told her to accept the duke's offer, go to Naples, and wait for me there; I would join her in the month of July on my return from Constantinople. I advised her to hire a respectable waiting-maid, and to conduct herself so that on my return I could marry her without having to blush for her. I foresaw that her fortune would depend more on her beauty than on her talent, and I was sufficiently well acquainted with my own character to know that I was not good at playing the easy-going lover or complaisant husband. Three days later she wrote to me, saying she had signed the agreement, and engaged a maid whom she could introduce as her mother, and that she was prepared to wait for me until I told her I no longer cared for her. Four days after the receipt of this letter, which was the last but one I received from her, I left for Venice.

I heard from the French officer at Pesaro that my passport had arrived from Rome, and that he would send it me with my baggage, if I would pay for the horse I had taken, or rather which had taken me; this point settled, I was at liberty to go where I would.

As soon as I reached Venice I went to the Bourse to take my passage to Constantinople, but there was no vessel leaving for that port for at least two months. So I took a cabin in a Venetian vessel sailing for Corfu in the course of a fortnight—*The Lady of the Rosary*, commanded by Captain Zane. Having thus prepared to fulfil my destiny, which, according to my superstitious imaginings, called me to Constantinople, I set out for the Square of Saint Mark, to see and to be seen, no longer an abbé, but a soldier. The first person I called on was the Abbé Grimani; he was at table with several guests, among them a Spanish officer, but that did not upset me at all. Grimani expressed some surprise at seeing me, and especially at my martial attire. I told him I was carrying despatches to Constantinople from Cardinal Acquaviva, and that I had come from the Spanish army. I had just made this statement when a voice exclaimed, 'That is a lie!'

'My position,' said I, 'does not permit me to accept an affront in silence.' Then bowing to the company I withdrew.

I knew that as I wore a uniform the assumption of excessive touchiness well became me; but I thought that now surely I should have a duel on my hands. The Abbé Grimani, however, persuaded the Spaniard to tender me an apology, so there the matter ended. The incident, however, served to show me what an invidious position mine was, and I made up my mind to enter the service of the State. For a hundred sequins, I bought a commission from a young lieutenant whose health would not permit him to remain in the army.

On the fifth of May I embarked for Constantinople, well set up in clothes, jewels, and ready money. Our ship carried twenty-four cannon and two hundred soldiers. We stopped a night at Orsera, when I could not but compare my actual circumstances with those of my former visit to that town. What a difference in state and fortune! I was sure that, in my imposing costume, no one would recognise the sickly little abbé, who, but for Brother Stephano, would have become—God knows what!

CHAPTER VI

CONSTANTINOPLE AND CORFU

I AM of opinion that a stupid servant is worse than a wicked one, or at any rate more harassing; one can be on one's guard against a knave, but not against a fool. One can punish the former, but not the latter. This chapter and the two following it were finished; they contained in detail what I shall now have to write more generally, for the foolish girl who waits on me took them to light the fire. She said, by way of excuse that the paper had been used, it was covered with scrawls and erasures, and therefore she had used it in preference to the nice, clean paper which was beside it. I was very angry, which was wrong, for the poor girl meant no harm. Anger deprives a man of judgment, anger and reflection are not akin. Fortunately this passion is of very short duration with me. After having wasted some time telling her she was a fool and an idiot, she confuted all my arguments by silence. I had to make the best of it, and to begin over again. Being in a very bad temper, what I write now will not be equal to what I wrote in a pleasant frame of mind, but the reader must put up with it.

After passing a month at Corfu, favourable winds brought us in eight or ten days to the Dardanelles; from there a Turkish boat carried us on to Constantinople. We arrived at Pera in mid-July, and for a wonder there was no talk of plague.

The first thing I was told was never to go out without informing my host of my destination, and without being accompanied by a janissary. These instructions I obeyed to the letter. In those days the Russians had not crushed Turk-

ish impertinence. I am told that now foreigners can go and come in perfect security.

The day after my arrival I presented my letter to Osman, the pasha of Caramania. This was the name borne by the Count de Bonneval since his taking the turban. I was shown in to an apartment furnished in French fashion. A stout, elderly man, dressed in French clothes, came towards me laughing, and asked what he could do for the protégé of a cardinal of the Romish Church, now that he could no longer call that Church his mother.

I told him that in a moment of despair I had asked the cardinal for letters for Constantinople, and now superstitiously considered myself obliged to deliver them.

'Then you have really no need of me?'

'True, your excellency, but I am delighted to have the honor of meeting a man all Europe has talked of, still talks of, and will talk of for many years to come.'

The cardinal had announced me as a man of letters, so the count asked if I would like to see his library. He took me into a room full of cupboards with latticed doors, hung with curtains. When he unlocked one of these doors, I saw, instead of rows of folio volumes, many bottles of wine of the finest vintage.

'This,' said the pasha, 'is my library and my harem. I am old, dissipation would only shorten my life, while wine prolongs it, or at any rate makes it more agreeable.'

Bonneval was handsome, but was too stout. An old sabre-cut in the belly obliged him to wear a silver plate over the seat of the wound. He said that he was no stricter a Mussulman than he had been a Christian. 'I had to say God was God, and Mahomet was His prophet. Who knows whether I thought so? I wear the turban as I would wear a uniform. When I left Venice I was as poor as a rat, and if the Jews had offered me the command of fifty thousand men, I would have laid siege to Jerusalem.'

He invited me to dine with him next day. There were English and other guests. We had an excellent repast, *à la*

Française, for his cook and his *maître d'hôtel* were two worthy French renegades. The person who most attracted me was a fine-looking man about sixty, who wore on his face an expression of wisdom and gentleness. Monsieur de Bonneval told me he was a rich and distinguished philosopher, renowned for integrity of conduct, purity of morals, and devotion to religion. He advised me to cultivate his acquaintance, should I have a chance of doing so. Later in the evening he presented me to this personage, whom he addressed as Josouff Ali, and who asked me many questions about my past and future life, and above all, why I had abandoned the peaceful condition of an ecclesiastic to take up the unsettled calling of a soldier.

He invited me to his palace, where I passed two hours admiring his flowers. His gardener was a Neapolitan sailor, who had been for thirty years a slave in Josouff's service.

In five or six weeks I became exceedingly intimate with the noble Turk, and we discussed many points of religion and morals together. He asked me one day if I was married, and on my answering no, and adding that I fancied I should never feel called upon to contract this tie, he led the conversation to the subject of chastity, which, according to him, was far from being a virtue; on the contrary, he maintained that it must be most offensive to God, as it violates the first percept He gave to man.

'I have,' he said, 'two sons and a daughter; the sons have already received their share of my fortune, the rest will go to my daughter, who is now fifteen. Her name is Zelmi, she has beautiful black eyes, like her mother's, black hair, and a skin like alabaster. She is tall and well made, speaks Greek and Italian, sings and accompanies herself on the harp. There is no man in the world who can boast of having seen her face. This girl is a treasure, and I offer her to you, but you must first live for a year at Adrianople with one of my relations, where you will learn our language and religion and our manners. As soon as you can declare yourself a Mussulman, my daughter shall be yours.

I will give you a house, and slaves, and money in abundance. Think over my offer, fix no date for your answer, you shall reply when the voice of fate speaks to you.'

I passed four days without seeing Josouff, and when we met on the fifth day we talked gaily on various matters, without mentioning matrimony. It was only fifteen days later that we alluded to it.

'Although this matter occupies my mind morning and night, I can make no decision,' I said. 'I have abandoned myself to God, and I am sure, as I have full confidence in Him, that I shall do what is right. When I have decided, it is to you, and to you alone, that I will tell the news. If I decide as you desire, you will from that moment exercise over me the authority of a father.'

Some days later I was walking in Josouff's garden, when the rain drove me to seek shelter in the house. I went in a hall where we sometimes dined. A slave was seated by the window bending over a tambour frame, and by her stood a girl, who on my approach hastily pulled a thick veil over her face.

I excused myself, and was going away, when she begged me to remain, adding that Josouff had ordered her to entertain me during his absence. I thought it must be Zelmi, and that her father had purposely given me this opportunity of speaking with her. The beautiful veiled lady said: 'Dost thou know who I am?'

'No; nor can I guess.'

'I am the wife of thy friend. I was born at Scio, where I lived until he married me, five years ago; I am now eighteen.'

I was much surprised that a Mussulman should be so open-minded as to allow me to converse with his wife, but the fact of her being a married woman set me more at my ease. I determined to push the adventure further; I wanted to see her face. A magnificent statue stood before me, but I could not see its soul; a thick gauze hid it from my eyes. A beautiful arm and a white hand, in which there was neither knot

nor vein, rested on the back of a seat, and my active fancy imagined the rest to be in harmony. The graceful folds of her muslin robe displayed the contour of her figure in all its perfection, and only hid the living satin of the surface. I longed to gaze in her eyes and read her mind therein. The Oriental costume is like a fine glaze spread over a porcelain vase, to prevent one from touching the flowers and figures painted on it; it hardly, if at all, interferes with the pleasure of the eye.

Josouff's wife wore a skirt which did not hide the symmetry of her limbs, the roundness of her hips, the slender grace of her waist, which was encircled by a belt richly embroidered in silver and precious stones. She had a breast on which Apelles might have modelled that of his Venus.

Beside myself with admiration, I stretched out my arm with an almost involuntary movement, and my audacious hand would have lifted the veil, had she not prevented me by raising herself lightly on the point of her pretty feet: she then reproached me in a voice as imposing as her posture.

'Dost thou merit the friendship of Josouff,' she asked, 'and seekest to violate his hospitality by insulting his wife?'

'Madam, you must pardon me. In my country the meanest of men may look on the face of a queen.'

'Yes; but not tear off her veil when she is covered. Josouff shall avenge me.'

This threat frightened me. I flung myself at her feet, and after much persuasion succeeded in calming her.

I took her hand, which she allowed, and she was listening complacently to my compliments, when her husband entered. He embraced me, and thanked his wife for having kept me company, then giving her his arm, led her back to her apartments.

I related this adventure to M. de Bonneval, who smiled when I told him of the risk I had run in trying to raise her veil.

'This Greek,' said he, 'was only laughing at you. You ran no danger; believe me, she is simply vexed at having had

to deal with such a novice. The most reserved Turkish woman is only modest so far as her face goes, as long as she has her veil on she blushes at nothing. I am sure that this one keeps her face covered even when alone with her husband.'

Josouff did not give me any more opportunities of being alone with his wife, and perhaps he was right. He came into a bazaar one day when I was turning over different stuffs, and praised the taste I showed in my selections. I did not buy anything, however, as I found the prices too high; he, on the contrary, declared them very reasonable, and purchased a quantity of things, which were delivered at my house the next day. It was a delicate attention on his part, and had I refused them I should have deeply offended him. He wrote to me at the same time telling me I should know how to dispose of the merchandise at Corfu. There were damask stuffs, embroidered in gold and silver, purses, pocket-books, sashes, scarves, handkerchiefs, and pipes—the whole to a value of four or five hundred piastres.

On the evening of my departure, the good man wept bitterly, and his tears were no less sincere. He said that in refusing his offer I had gained his esteem, since it proved my disinterestedness. On board the ship I found an immense case, containing more presents from him—coffee, tobacco, and spices, and a superb pipe stem in jasmine wood covered with gold filigree, which I sold for a hundred sequins. I sold the other things for a small fortune. M. de Bonneval also gave me some rare wines. I sold some, and I offered the rest to different people at Corfu. In this way I made several useful acquaintances.

We left in the beginning of September, and arrived at Corfu in fifteen days. I was well received by the Governor of the Galliasses, to whom I had an introduction. He asked me if I would care to accept the post of adjutant. This offer was a great honour, and I gladly accepted it. Without further ceremony he had me shown to the room I was to occupy.

I got a French soldier as servant, and as he dressed hair well, and was besides a good talker, I was well satisfied with him, for while he was arranging my beautiful hair I could exercise myself in speaking French. This soldier was a regular scamp, a drunkard, and a libertine. He was a peasant from Picardy, and could hardly write his own name, but he was amusing, and knew a quantity of anecdotes and songs.

About the middle of November, my soldier servant fell ill of inflammation of the lungs, and was taken to the hospital. He grew rapidly worse, and received the last sacraments. The priest who administered them brought to my captain a small packet which had been confided to him by the dying man. It contained a copper seal engraved with a ducal coat of arms, an extract from a baptismal register, and a sheet of paper covered with writing in the French language. As the captain only spoke Italian, he asked me to translate it.

I read the following deposition:—

'I wish this sheet of paper to be given to my captain when I am dead; until then my confessor is to make no use of it. I beg my captain to have my body placed in a vault so that it can be exhumed if the duke, my father, desire it. I beg him to send to the French ambassador at Venice the extract from the register concerning my birth, and the seal with my coat of arms, that all may be sent to my father, as my hereditary rights will now pass to the prince, my brother.

'I support of which I now place here my signature.

'François VI., Charle-Philippe-Louis Foucaud,
'Prince de la Rochefoucauld.'

In the baptismal extract this name was repeated, with that of his father, François, the fifth duke. The name of his mother was given as Gabrielle du Plessis.

This queer document made me laugh, but seeing that my

captain thought my hilarity misplaced, I left him, without explaining the reason of my mirth, though I was sure that this nonsense would soon become the standing joke of Corfu. I had known the Abbé de Liancourt in Rome. He was a great-grandson of Charles, Duc de Liancourt, whose sister, Gabrielle du Plessis, had married François, the fifth duke, but this marriage dated from the beginning of the last century. I had copied some documents for the Abbé de Liancourt, and was therefore familiar with the family history; the attempted imposition of my servant, La Valeur, seemed the more ridiculous, because the man being, as I supposed, dead, it could be of no advantage to him. I was still smiling at all this, when I received a summons from the *proveditor*.

'It seems,' began the old general, 'that your servant was a prince?'

'Monseigneur,' I replied. 'I never thought so while he was alive, and I have no reason to think so now he is dead.' But the general would not listen to me. He maintained that no man on his deathbed would play such a joke; and besides, there was the seal with the ducal arms to support the claim.

When I suggested that I knew something of the families of Liancourt, du Plessis, and de la Rochefoucauld, he rudely told me I knew nothing at all: so I determined to hold my tongue.

The people around the general began to speak of the deceased with respect. One said he was handsome, another that he looked aristocratic, another that he was always amiable, obliging, not haughty with his comrades, and that he sang like an angel. Some one having asked my opinion of him, I replied that he was certainly gay, for he was generally drunk; that he was dirty and quarrelsome, but a good hairdresser.

As we were discussing him that evening in rushed the captain. La Valeur, he said, was still breathing. The general, looking at me in a significant manner, said he would be glad if he recovered. The next day I heard he was bet-

ter. The doctor said he was out of danger. They spoke of him at table, but I did not open my mouth. The next day after that the general gave orders for him to be taken to a better apartment, where he was to have a servant to wait on him. The credulous general actually paid him a visit, the other officers followed suit, and the newly-found prince became the rage. In eight days he was well and began to go out. He dined and supped at the general's table, where he regularly fell asleep because of his intemperance, but every one believed in him, for two reasons: one was that he calmly awaited news from Venice, and the other that he declared that the priest had violated the secret of the confessional in giving up the papers before his death, therefore he solicited his punishment; the unhappy priest was already in prison.

I met La Valeur one day on the esplanade, and he stopped and reproached me with not having been to see him. I laughed and told him the best thing he could do was to get away before the truth leaked out. To this he replied with the grossest insults.

The imposition would have been discovered from the beginning if any one had had a *Royal Almanack*, which contains the genealogy of all princely families, but no one possessed the book, not even the French Consul, who was a perfect fool and as ignorant as the rest.

In speaking of La Valeur to Madame Sagredo, I asked, 'Does he talk much of his family?'

'Of his mother—yes. He loved her tenderly. She was a du Plessis.'

'If she were still alive she would be about a hundred and fifty years old.'

'What nonsense!'

'Yes, madame, she was married in the time of Marie de Médicis.'

'But she is named in his baptismal register—and then his seal——'

'Does he know his own coat of arms by sight?'

Just as that moment he was announced, and Madame

Sagredo said: 'Prince, here is M. Casanova says you do not know your own coat of arms.'

At these words he came to me, called me coward, and struck me a blow on the side of my head which made me giddy. I took up my hat and stick and walked slowly to the door. As I went downstairs I heard a gentleman saying in a loud voice that the madman ought to be flung out of the window.

I posted myself on the esplanade, waiting for him to leave the house: as soon as I saw him I rushed at him and dealt him several violent strokes with a cane. He stepped back against the wall; a gentleman would have drawn his sword to defend himself, but the poltroon never thought of such a thing, and I beat him soundly and left him lying on the ground in a pool of blood.

I went into a café near by, and took a glass of lemonade without sugar. A crowd of young officers came round me, all saying I should have done well to have killed him. In about half an hour the general's adjutant appeared and said his excellency had given orders for me to be put under arrest at once. I was to go on board *La Bastarde*. This was the nickname for a certain galley, on which the discipline was very severe; any one under arrest on board her was obliged to wear ankle chains like a convict.

'Very good, sir,' said I, 'I shall make no resistance.' The adjutant went out and I followed him. But at the end of the street I slipped down a lane leading to the sea, and I walked along till I found an empty boat beached with two oars lying in it. I jumped in and rowed with all my might after a six-oared *caych* which was going against the wind. As soon as I overtook it I asked the *carabouchiri* to put me aboard a big fishing-smack which was standing out to sea. I made a bargain with the skipper of the smack. He ran up three sails, and in two hours we were fifteen miles from Corfu; about midnight, the wind having gone down, they landed me without my even asking where. I did not want to arouse suspicion. I knew I was far from Corfu, that was

enough. It was moonlight, and I could distinguish a church, with a house near by, a long barn open at each end, a wide plain, and some mountains. I entered the barn, and finding some straw, lay down, and slept pretty well. I awoke at daybreak. I was shivering with cold, for it was the first of December, and in spite of the mild climate the nights were fresh, and I had only a thin uniform on.

I heard the bell ringing and went towards the church. The *papa* or priest, who had a long beard, seemed surprised at my apparition. He asked me in Greek if I was *Romeo*, Greek. On my replying that I was *Fragico*, Italian, he turned his back on me, went into his house, and locked the door. Not knowing what step to take next, I began to walk back towards the sea, when I saw a man, a woman, and a boy about two years old, coming in my direction. I spoke to the man in Greek, and he replied to me in Italian, saying he had come from Cephalonia, and was going with his wife and child to Venice, but that he wished to hear Mass first, at the church of the Virgin of Casopo.

'Do you know the priest?' I asked.

'No.'

'Have you any good merchandise on your boat?'

'Yes; if you are thinking of buying anything, come and have breakfast with me, and I will show you what I have.' I followed him on board his boat, where he gave me an excellent breakfast. His cargo consisted of cotton, linen, raisins, oil, and some capital wine. Besides these things he had a stock of nightcaps, stockings, umbrellas, and ship-biscuit, of which I was then passionately fond. I possessed thirty sound teeth in those days, than which it would be difficult to find any finer or whiter. I have but two left now. I bought a little of everything without bargaining, including a good gun, with powder and shot. Covered with a warm cloak, my gun on my shoulder, and my purchases in a big sack, I returned to land, determined to lodge at the *papa's* house, whether he liked it or not. I was of a desperate calmness. I had three or four hundred sequins in my pocket, but

I was sure to be discovered sooner or later, and as I had outlawed myself, I should be treated as an outlaw. I could only abandon myself to chance, and for the moment the essential was to find board and lodging. I knocked at the door of the priest's house. He showed himself at a window, but shut it again without listening to me. I kicked, I knocked, I cursed, I swore, but all to no avail. At last, furious, I pointed my gun at a poor sheep, who was grazing twenty paces from me with several others, and tumbled it over. The shepherd came running up; the *papa* rushed out, crying, 'Thief, thief!' and began to ring the tocsin. In a few minutes a crowd of peasants armed with guns, scythes, and staves came hurrying down the mountains. I retired into the barn and sat down on the sack. Eight or ten peasants came towards me, their guns levelled. I stopped them by throwing them a handful of copper money, which I had collected on the boat. The good creatures looked at each other in astonishment. They did not know what to make of a well-dressed young man who flung his money about so liberally. The *papa,* the beadle, and the shepherd tried to excite the populace against me, but I sat quietly on my sack. Presently one of them drew a little nearer and asked why I had killed the sheep.

'To eat, when I have paid for it.'

'But what if his holiness should ask you to pay a sequin for it?'

'Here it is.'

The *papa* took the sequin and went off grumbling, and there, so far as the sheep was concerned, the matter ended.

I asked the peasant who acted as spokesman if he could get me a lodging; he said he could get me a whole house if I liked, and that he himself was a capital cook and would be glad to serve me. He called up two big fellows, who laid hold, one of my bag, the other of my sheep.

'I wish I had twenty-four fine rascals like that in my service,' said I, as we walked along; 'and you as my lieutenant; I would pay you well.'

'I have been a soldier myself,' said my man, 'and served in the defence of Corfu. I will get a military guard together for you this very day if you wish.' After walking for twenty minutes or so we reached the house, which was a comfortable one, containing three rooms and a stable. My lieutenant went off to procure what I needed; among other things, a woman to make me some shirts. I acquired in the course of that day a bed, furniture, *batterie de cuisine*, a good dinner, twenty-four stout young peasants, well armed, and a superannuated sempstress, with three or four pretty apprentices. After supper I found myself in the best possible humour, and surrounded by some thirty people who treated me like a king. They did not understand why I had come to their little island. The only thing that troubled me was, that none of the girls spoke Italian, and I knew very little Greek.

The next morning when my lieutenant turned out the guard, I could not help laughing. They were like a flock of sheep; all fine men, well set up and alert; but without a uniform and discipline. Nevertheless their chief taught them to present arms and obey orders. I placed three sentinels, one in front of the house, one at the side, and one overlooking the beach: the last was to warn us if he saw any large boat appear. I led a pleasant life, my table was covered with succulent dishes, excellent mutton and snipe such as I have never tasted except at Saint Petersburg. I drank Scopolo wine, and the best muscat in the Archipelago. I never went out without my lieutenant and two of my body-guard, for certain young men in the neighbourhood were furious with me for having taken their sweethearts into my establishment.

One day my lieutenant told me that the following Sunday the *papa* was going to pronounce the *cataramonachia* against me, and that if I did not prevent him I should fall ill of a slow fever, which would carry me off in six months.

The *cataramonachia*, it appears, is a curse uttered by the priest while holding aloft the Blessed Sacrament. I was not afraid of the curse, but I was afraid of poison, the effects of which are far more to be dreaded.

The next day I went to church, and said to the priest in a resolute voice: 'The moment I suffer from the slightest symptom of fever I shall blow out your brains; now you know what to do—lay a curse on me which will kill me instantly, for if you try a lingering one I will surely do as I say.'

Early on Monday morning the *papa* came to see me. I had a slight headache, but he hastened to assure me that it was only the effect of a heaviness in the air peculiar to the island of Casopo. I had no fever, needless to say; and quietly pursued my usual routine, when one fine morning the sentinel gave a cry of alarm; an armed sloop had appeared in the bay, and an officer had landed. I called my troop to arms, ordered my lieutenant to receive the officer, who was accompanied only by a guide. Then buckling on my sword I awaited his coming.

It was the Adjutant Minolto, who had executed the order for my arrest.

'You are alone,' said I; 'do you come as a friend?'

'I am obliged to come as a friend, I have not the necessary force to come as an enemy. But the state in which I find you is like a fantastic dream!'

'Sit down, and dine with me.'

'With all my heart; after that we will leave together.'

'You will leave alone. I shall only leave here on the understanding that I am not to be arrested, and that I am to have full satisfaction from that maniac, whom the general ought to send to the galleys.'

'Be wise and come with me quietly. I am not able to take you to-day, but when I have returned and made my report I shall come back in such force that you will have to surrender.'

'But if I surrender I shall be treated more harshly than if I had in the first instance obeyed the general's unjust order.'

'I do not think so—but come with me and you will soon know your fate.'

Towards the end of dinner we heard a great noise outside, and my lieutenant came in to say that the peasants were ready to defend me against the armed force which they heard had come to carry me off to Corfu. I sent word to reassure the brave fellows, and to give them a barrel of wine, after which they went off, having first discharged their guns in the air as a sign of devotion.

'All this is very funny,' said the adjutant, 'but it will become tragic if you do not follow me; my duty compels me to report exactly all your proceedings.'

'I will follow you if you will promise to set me at liberty on disembarking at Corfu.'

'I have orders to consign you to M. Foscari in the *bastarde*.'

'You will not execute those orders. Not this time. With five hundred peasants I am not afraid of three thousand men.'

'One will be sufficient. All these men who seem so devoted to you cannot protect you against the one who will be bribed to blow out your brains for a few pieces of gold. I will even go further and say of all these Greeks there is not one who would not assassinate you for twenty sequins. Believe me, the best thing you can do is to return with me; at Corfu you will triumph, you will be applauded and fêted. You will yourself tell of your mad freak, and you will be laughed at and admired at one and the same time. Every one esteems you, the general himself must esteem you, for he cannot help remembering what you told him.'

'What has become of that wretched La Valeur?'

'Four days ago a frigate arrived; the despatches it brought contained, no doubt, the necessary information, for the false duke has disappeared; no one knows where he is, and no one dare ask, the general's mistake was too gross a one.'

'But after I thrashed him, was he received in the clubs?'

'How can you ask such a question? Do you not remember that he wore his sword, and never attempted to draw it. No one would speak to him. You punished him terribly. His

arm was broken, and his jaw fractured, yet in spite of his deplorable state he has been removed, of course by orders of the governor. All Corfu is wondering at your flight; it was only yesterday that we learnt you were here, through a letter the *papa* wrote to the *protopapa*, complaining of an Italian officer who had taken possession of an island where he ruled by armed force, after debauching the girls, and threatening to blow out the reverened gentleman's brains if he laid the *cataramonachia* on him. This letter was read in the assembly, and the general nearly died of laughter, but nevertheless he told me to seize you, with twelve grenadiers if necessary.'

'I will go with you at midnight.'

'Why not now?'

'Because I will not expose myself to a night on the *bastarde*, I wish to arrive in Corfu in broad daylight.'

'But what shall we do here for eight mortal hours?'

'We will go and visit my nymphs, who are far prettier than any in Corfu, after which we will have supper.'

I ordered my lieutenant to prepare a splendid supper. I made him heir to all my provisions; and to my janissaries I presented a week's pay. They wished to accompany me, fully armed, to the boat, and the deference they showed me amused my captor so that he laughed all night. We arrived at Corfu about eight in the morning, and I was consigned to the *bastarde*, where the commandant, M. Foscari, received me very ill. Had he possessed the slightest nobility of soul he would not have been in such a hurry to put me in chains. Without a word he sent me down below to receive these decorations; one chain was riveted round my right ankle, and they were just unbuckling my left shoe, when the adjutant arrived with the general's orders to return me my sword and set me at liberty.

CHAPTER VII

WILD LIFE IN VENICE

It was written that I should return to Venice as I left it, a mere ensign. The *proveditor* broke his word to me, and the bastard son of a Venetian nobleman was promoted over my head. From that moment military life became hateful to me, and I determined to abandon it. This chagrin was only an instance of the inconstancy of fortune; everything went against me, I never played but I lost, not at the tables only, but everywhere my luck seemed to have deserted me. When I first returned from Casopo I was the most fêted man in Corfu, rich, lucky at cards, beloved by every one, and the favourite of the most beautiful woman in the city. I led the fashion. Then I began to lose health, money, credit, and consideration. My good humour and intelligence, the very faculty of expressing myself seemed to leave me, to melt with my fortune. I chattered, but my words had no effect, for I was known to be down on my luck! The ascendency I had over Madame F—— went with the rest, the good lady became completely indifferent to me.

So I left the place almost penniless, after having sold or pawned everything I possessed of value. Twice I had gone to Corfu rich, and twice I had left it poor, and I contracted debts which I have never paid, more from carelessness than want of will. When I was rich and happy every one made much of me, when I was poor and lean no one showed me consideration. With a full purse and an air of confidence I was thought witty and amusing; with an empty purse, and told in a different voice, my stories were stupid and insipid. Had I suddenly grown rich again, I should once more have been considered the eighth wonder of the world. O men!

O fortune! I was avoided, as though the ill luck which pursued me had been infectious.

When I got to Venice my first visit was to my guardian, M. Grimani. He received me kindly, but told me that he had my brother François in safe keeping at the fort of Saint Andrew, where he had formerly imprisoned me.

'He is working hard,' he said, 'copying the battle-pieces of Simonetti, which he sells, so he manages to earn his living and study to become a good painter at one and the same time.'

On leaving M. Grimani I went to the fort, where I found my brother, brush in hand. He seemed neither happy nor unhappy, and was in excellent health. When I asked him for what crime he was shut up, he answered: 'Ask the major, perhaps he can tell you; for my part I have not the least idea.'

The major came in just then, and after saluting him I asked by what right he kept my brother in confinement.

'I have no explanation to give you,' he answered curtly.

The next day I went to the war office, and laid a complaint before the minister, at the same time notifying him of my desire to resign my commission.

Shortly after, my brother was set at liberty, and the acceptance of my resignation was notified to me. I pocketed a hundred sequins for my commission, laid aside my uniform, and became once more my own master.

I had to think seriously of some means of earning my living. I decided to become a professional gambler; but Dame Fortune did not favour me, and in eight days I found myself without a sol. What could I do? I had no desire to starve, but no one was willing to employ me. It was then that my humble musical talent stood me in good stead. Dr. Gozzi had taught me how to scrape a tune on a fiddle, and M. Grimani got me a place in his theatre of Saint Samuel, where I was paid a crown a day. On this I could manage till something better turned up.

I did not show my nose in any of the houses where I had

once been so welcome. I judged that I had fallen too low to be received by the *beau-monde*. I knew I was considered a scapegrace, but I did not care. People despised me, but I knew that I had done nothing despicable. The position humiliated me, but so long as I did not expose myself to slights, I did not feel myself degraded. I had not given up all hopes of better fortune. I was still young, and the volatile goddess smiles on youth. I earned enough by my violin to keep me without asking help from any one. Happy is the man who can manage to keep himself. I tried to stifle my better nature, and threw myself heart and soul into the pursuits and habits of my low companions. After the play I would go with them to some *cabaret*, where we would remain till we were drunk, and then depart to finish the night in still lower resorts. We would amuse ourselves with inventing and executing the wildest acts of bravado in different quarters of the town.

In the month of April, the eldest son of the Cornaros married one of the daughters of the house of Saint Pol, and I was bidden to the wedding in my quality of musician. The third day of the feast, as I was going home about an hour before dawn, I saw a senator in his red robes going down the stairs in front of me; as he stepped into his gondola, he dropped a letter from his pocket; I hurried after him to return it. Having thanked me, he asked me where I lived, telling me to get into his gondola and he would take me home. We had hardly been seated a moment when he asked me to shake his left arm, for he felt a strange numbness in it. I worked it up and down vigorously, but he said, in an indistinct voice, that the numbness was spreading up his left side, and that he believed he was dying. I pulled back the curtain, and saw by the lamp-light that his mouth was drawn all awry. I knew that it was apoplexy. I called to the gondoliers to stop, while I ran for a doctor. I found one in a few minutes and hurried him away with me in his dressing-gown. He bled the senator, while I tore up my shirt for bandages. This done, the gondoliers rowed in haste

to their master's palace at San Marino, where we aroused the servants, and I carried him almost lifeless to bed.

Voting myself into the place of command, I sent for another doctor, and took my place at the bedside. By and by two noblemen, friends of the sick man, came in. They were in despair. They questioned me, and I told them what I could. They did not know who I was, and they did not dare to ask. For my part I thought it best to maintain a discreet silence. The sick man gave no sign of life. We remained with him throughout the day. A quiet little dinner was served to us, which we partook of in the sickroom.

In the evening the elder of the friends told me if I had business elsewhere I must not neglect it—they would pass the night with the invalid.

'And I, gentlemen,' said I, 'will pass the night in this armchair, for if I leave this poor man he will die, whereas so long as I remain he will live.'

This sententious reply struck them dumb with surprise; they exchanged glances. We sat down to supper, and in the course of conversation I learnt that the patient was M. de Bragadin, celebrated in Venice for his eloquence, his talents as a statesman, and the gallant adventures of his youth. He was handsome, learned, lively, kind-hearted, and about fifty years old. One of his friends belonged to the family of Dandolo; the other was a Barbaro. They were all three devotedly attached to each other, and lived in the closest intimacy.

About midnight our patient became worse, the fever increased, and he seemed hardly able to breathe. I called up his two friends, and told them that I was certain he would die unless we removed a huge mercury plaster with which the doctor had covered his chest: without waiting for their sanction I tore it off and sponged him with warm water. In less than five minutes he began to breathe peacefully, and by and by fell into a quiet sleep. When the doctor came in the morning, M. de Bragadin was well enough to tell him himself what had happened, adding, 'Providence has sent me a

physician who knows more of medicine than you do.'

'In that case I will retire, and leave you in his charge,' replied the doctor, and bowing coldly to me, he departed.

I saw that I had bewitched the three worthy friends, and I began to give myself airs, lay down the law, and quote authors whom I had never read.

M. de Bragadin had a weakness for abstract science, and one day he told me he was sure I possessed a superhuman knowledge, I was too learned for a young man. I did not want to shock his vanity by contradicting him, and then and there, in the presence of his friends made a most extravagant statement. I told him an old hermit had taught me how to make certain numerical calculations, by means of which I could obtain an answer to any question if I wrote it down according to a system he had also imparted to me, the words of the question must be represented by numbers, and pyramidal numbers, the answers were given in the same form.

'The answers are sometimes very obscure,' I said, 'yet if I had not consulted my oracle the other night, I should not now have the pleasure of knowing your excellencies. When I asked if I should meet any one at the ball whose encounter would be disagreeable to me, I was told, "You must leave the ball one hour before dawn." I obeyed, and your excellency knows the rest.'

'It is the clavicula of Solomon which you possess,' said M. de Bragadin, 'which the vulgar call the *cabbala*. It is a veritable treasure. You can, if you like, make your fortune with it.'

'I got it,' I said, 'from a hermit on Mount Carpegna, when I was under arrest in the Spanish army.'

I saw I had produced a good effect on my listeners; the difficulty was not to destroy it. M. Dandolo said he would write a question the meaning of which could only be understood by himself. He handed me a slip of paper couched in such obscure language I could make neither head nor tail of it; but it was too late to draw back. I could but trust to effrontery to carry me through. I put down four lines in

ordinary figures, and handed them to him with an indifferent air. He read them, re-read them, and then pronounced the reply to have been inspired by more than mortal intelligence. I was saved.

It was now the turn of the others. They questioned me on all sorts of subjects. My answers, perfectly incomprehensible to myself as they were, enchanted them. They found in each the solution they chose to find, and they asked me in how short a time I could teach them the rules of my sublime science.

'In a few hours,' I said, 'and I shall be very glad to do so. Although the hermit assured me that if I communicated the secret to any one, I should die suddenly within three days —this may, however, have been merely a threat.'

On hearing this, M. de Bragadin looked very grave, and said I must believe what the hermit had told me, and obey him implicitly, and from this time forth there was no further question of their learning the secret.

In this way I became the hierophant of the three friends, who, in spite of their education and literary ability, were perfectly infatuated about the occult sciences, and believed in the possibility of all sorts of things contrary to moral and physical laws. These noblemen were not only good Christians, they were devout and scrupulous in the exercise of their religion. They were none of them married, and they had for ever renounced the society of women, whose implacable foes they now were. They maintained that it was the necessary condition of communication and intimate intercourse with spirits.

It was not very commendable of me to deceive them in this way, but I was only twenty, and had been earning my bread in the orchestra of a theatre, and it was none of my business to point out to them the folly of their illusions. I did but add one to the number when I constituted myself their apostle. I procured for them a great deal of innocent pleasure, and for myself some pleasure which was not so innocent, but, as I said before, I was twenty years old and

had a fine constitution. What man, given these advantages, does not seek by every possible means to get all the good he can out of life?

No one in Venice could understand how men of their character could associate with a man of mine. They were all heavenly, I was all earthly; they were severe and strict in their lives, I was entirely given up to pleasure. No one guessed the secret, and I daily strengthened the hold I had on them. By the beginning of summer M. de Bragadin was well enough to appear at the Senate. The day before he resumed his seat there he sent for me.

'Whatever you may be,' he said, 'I owe you my life. Your former protectors who tried to make you a priest, a doctor, a lawyer, or a soldier, only succeeded in making a fiddler of you; they were fools who did not understand you. Your guardian angel has brought you to me; I understand and appreciate you. I shall treat you as my son to the day of my death. Your place will be always laid at my table, your room is ready for you in my palace. You will have a servant to wait entirely on you, a private gondola, and ten sequins a month for pocket money; it is what my father gave me when I was your age. You need have no thought for the future; you have nothing to do but to amuse yourself, and whatever may happen be sure I shall always be your father and friend.'

Such, my dear reader, is the history of my metamorphosis; from the rank of a poor violinist, I was suddenly raised to that of the rich and powerful.

CHAPTER VIII

CRISTINA

I NOW began to live an independent life, recognising no law save inclination. I was rich, endowed by nature with an agreeable and somewhat imposing exterior; I was an inveterate gambler, a great talker, a sworn worshipper of beauty, and I cared only for such society as amused me, so it is not to be wondered at if I made many enemies. I respected the law, but at the same time, I considered myself above all vulgar prejudices. I fancied that on these terms I should be allowed to live in perfect freedom under an aristocratic government, such as that of Venice. But it was not to be. The Venetian republic, for reasons of self-preservation, must herself bow before imperative state considerations. I only touch on this subject, so as to somewhat justify my policy as a citizen, whose tendency that year inevitably led to a state prison.

My conduct was not calculated to please the three worthy gentlemen whose oracle I had become, but they were too fond of me to remonstrate severely with me.

About this time I became attached to the most celebrated courtesan in Venice. Her name was Ancilla. She afterwards married the dancer Campioni, and went with him to London. We played cards every night at her house, and the stakes were often extravagantly high. The young Count Medini, whom I met there, was as reckless a gamester as myself, but more favoured by fortune, and he won large sums from me. I bore my bad luck as cheerfully as I could, never doubting him, until one evening he cheated me in so flagrant a manner that, easy dupe though I had been up to that moment, my eyes were opened. I drew a pistol from

my pocket, and, turning the barrel against his breast, I threatened to kill him if he did not instantly give me back what he had stolen from me. We had a stormy scene, during which Ancilla fainted. Medini finally returned my money, but challenged me to leave the house and cross swords with him.

I accepted, and laying my pistols on the table followed him to a convenient place outside the city, where we fought by the light of the moon. I had the good luck to run him through the shoulder, so that he could not hold his sword, and was obliged to ask for quarter. After this episode I went home and slept the sleep of the just; but when next morning, I gave an account of the affair to my adopted father, he advised me to leave Venice immediately and take refuge at Padua. Count Medini was my enemy for the rest of my life; the reader will hear of him again.

After a few months spent at Padua, I returned to Venice, where I should have been perfectly happy if I could have abstained from punting at basset. My infatuation for this game often led me into trouble. I had not the prudence to leave off when I was losing, or the strength of mind to leave off when I had won moderately, consequently I was always in need of money.

Once, when I was very hard pressed, I tried to borrow two hundred sequins from my old friend, Madame Manzoni. She was not able to procure the money for me, but she persuaded a woman friend to intrust a very fine diamond to me, worth treble the amount I required. I was to take it to Treviso and pawn it, for there were no pawnbrokers in Venice; the Jews always found means to prevent the Republic from opening one of these useful establishments, so as to keep the trade of money-lending in their own hands.

As I was passing along the quay of Saint Job, I noticed a richly-dressed village-girl seated in a gondola. I stopped to look more closely at her, and the man in the prow called out and asked me if I wanted to go to Mestre; for if so, he would take me for half price. But I replied that I would

give him twice what he asked if he would promise not to embark any more passengers. Having concluded this bargain, I jumped in, and seated myself beside the pretty little peasant, who was chatting and laughing with a pleasant-faced old priest.

'The gondoliers,' said the latter, by way of opening the conversation, 'are in luck; they are taking us to Mestre for thirty sols apiece, with the right to carry other passengers if they can find any, and they are sure to. You see they have already one.'

'When I am in a gondola, reverend father,' said I, 'there is no room for any one else'; here I ostentatiously drew out my purse and gave some extra money to the boatman, who then gave me the title of 'Excellency.' The good priest naïvely thought I had a right to this distinction, and continued to address me as 'Excellency,' until I explained to him I was no nobleman, only a lawyer's clerk.

'Ah!' exclaimed the young girl, 'I am glad to hear that.'

'And may I ask why, signorina?'

'Because I am too shy to speak to a gentleman. I like to be with people who do not think themselves any better than I am. My father, the brother of my uncle,' pointing to the priest, 'was a farmer. I am his only child, and his heiress. I think there is not much difference between a lawyer's clerk and the daughter of a rich farmer. I need not feel shy with you, and now that we know all about each other we shall get on better, shall we not, uncle?'

'Yes, my dear Cristina, though you must own that the gentleman was very friendly before he knew who or what we were.'

'Perhaps I should not have been so friendly, my reverend father, if I had not been attracted by the beauty of your charming niece.'

At these words they both burst out laughing, and as I could not see that I had said anything very comical, I concluded that they must be stupid as well as rustic.

'Why do you laugh, my pretty one?' I asked. 'Is it to

show me your beautiful teeth? I must own that I have never seen finer ones even in Venice.'

'Oh, it was not for that, sir, though in Venice every one complimented me on them. In our village all the girls have as white teeth as I have. I was laughing at something I would rather die than tell you.'

'I will tell you,' said her uncle: 'when she saw you coming along the quay, she said, "There's a handsome fellow! I wish he was in the boat with us," and when you got in she was delighted.'

'Do not look so cross,' said I, 'and thump your uncle on the shoulder. I am glad my appearance pleases you. I do not conceal from you that I find you charming.'

'You say so now, but I know you Venetians, you all tell me I am charming, but when it comes to the point not one of you will declare himself.'

'What sort of a declaration do you want?'

'The only one that I care for, the one which is followed by a good business-like marriage in church, in the presence of witnesses.'

'This girl,' interposed the uncle, 'such as you see her, is a good match for any man. She has a dowry of three thousand crowns. She declares she will only marry a Venetian, so I took her to Venice to find a husband. We stayed there for a fortnight with some friends of ours, but though she went to several houses where there were likely young men, it was no use; those she liked did not seem to care for her, and those who cared for her were not to her taste.'

'But do you think,' said I, 'that a marriage is made like an omelette? Fifteen days in Venice is not enough; you must stay there at least six months. For instance, I think your niece is as pretty as a flower, and I shall be thankful if the wife God means for me is like her; nevertheless, if you were to give me fifty thousand crowns down to marry her this moment I would not do it. A sensible man wants to know the character of a woman before he marries her, for it is neither money nor beauty which makes for happiness.'

'What do you mean by character?' asked Cristina. 'A good handwriting?'

'No, my angel, and your question makes me laugh. I mean qualities of the heart and mind. I must marry some day, and have been looking for a wife these last three years. I know many girls as pretty as you, and with good dowries, but after I have studied them a short time, I see they will not do for me.'

'What ailed them?'

'Well one, whom I should certainly have married, for I was very fond of her, was excessively vain, though it took me two months to find it out. She would have ruined me in fine clothes; just fancy, she spent a sequin a month on the hairdresser, and as much again in pomades and essences.'

'She was a fool; I spend ten sols a year in wax, which I mix with goat's grease, and it makes an excellent pomade.'

'Another, I discovered, could never have children; that would be terrible, for if I marry I want to have a family.'

'As for that, 'tis as God wills; but I have always been healthy, have I not, uncle?'

'Another thought herself wiser than I, though every minute she said something silly. Another was melancholy, and I want a lively wife.'

'Think of that, uncle! and my mother is always telling me I am too lively!'

'Another was afraid to be left alone with me, and when I kissed her ran and told her mother.'

'She was a goose. I have never had a sweetheart, but I know if I had one there are certain things I should never tell, even my mother.'

'Then there is another thing, I want my wife to have black eyes, and every girl now knows how to dye hers; but they won't catch me. I have learnt the secret.'

'Are mine black?'

'They look black, but they are not so really. Still, you are very charming.'

'How funny! You think you know everything, and you

say my eyes are made up. Such as they are, sir, they are as God made them. Don't you believe me?'

'No, they are too handsome to be natural.'

'Well, I declare!'

'Forgive me; I see I have been too outspoken.'

A long silence followed this dispute. The priest smiled to himself from time to time, but the girl had great difficulty in hiding her vexation.

She was quite adorable; her head was dressed in the fashion of a rich peasant, with at least a hundred sequins' worth of gold pins and arrows holding up her ebony hair. She wore long massive ear-rings, and a gold chain twisted twenty times round her slim white throat.

When the gondola entered the long canal of Marghera I asked the priest if he had a carriage to take him to Treviso, which was the coaching station for their village, and if not would he accept two places in the chaise I intended to hire, but his niece interrupted him and declared she would not travel with me. I saw I had offended her, and hastened to make my peace by saying that I could tell if her eyes were really black by washing them with rose water, or if she shed tears I should know at once.

'Cry, then, my child,' said her uncle, 'and the gentleman will do justice to you and your eyes.'

At this she began to laugh, and laughed so heartily that tears actually rolled down her cheeks, and so we were all good friends again.

I ordered breakfast and a post-chaise, but first of all the good priest said he must say Mass.

'Yes,' I said, 'you shall say a prayer for me, and we will come and hear it!'

On the way to church I offered my arm to his niece.

'What would your mistress say,' she asked, 'if she saw us walking like this?'

'I have no mistress, and I shall never have one again, for I shall never find such a pretty girl as you—no, not in Venice!'

'That is a pity, for your sake: we shall never go back to Venice; even if we did we could not stay six months, which is the time you say it takes you to make acquaintance with a girl.'

'I would gladly pay your expenses there.'

'Tell that to my uncle then; perhaps he will think over it, for I could not go alone.'

'And in six months *you* would know *me?*'

'I know you already.'

'And do you think you would love me?'

'Yes, very much, if you were my husband.'

I stared at this girl in astonishment; she looked like a princess disguised as a peasant. Her thick silk gown was braided with gold, and must have cost twice as much as any fashionable dress. It was buttoned high up to the neck, but as the town fashion of capes had not got as far as the country I could see how beautifully made she was. She wore bracelets to match the necklace, and her richly trimmed petticoat, which only reached to her ankles, showed the neatest foot in the world.

After breakfast we drove to Treviso, and there I had no difficulty in persuading the priest to accept dinner and supper, after which it was arranged he was to take the chaise and go on to his village by moonlight.

During dinner it occurred to me that perhaps he would take my brilliant to the pawnbroker for me, and this he readily agreed to do. He went off leaving me alone with Cristina, but returned in an hour to say that the diamond could not be pledged for two days, as there was a fête in the town and the shops were closed, but that he had seen the cashier at the pawnbroker's who had promised to give him twice the amount I asked.

'You would do me a service, father,' said I, 'if you would come back here the day after to-morrow, and pawn the diamond for me, as you have been about it once; it might look strange if I were to go. I would gladly pay your expenses.'

He promised to do so, and I secretly hoped, though I did not dare to suggest it, that his niece would come with him; but when we were seated round the fire after dinner I grew bolder.

'Reverend father,' I said, 'if you would take your niece back to Venice I would find you some lodgings in the house of a most respectable woman, and I would defray the cost of your living there. I wish to become better acquainted with the signorina before I ask for her hand in marriage.'

During this speech I was watching Cristina out of the tail of my eye, and I saw her smile with pleasure.

'If you will only consent,' I said, 'in eight days everything can be arranged, and during that time I will write to you, dear Cristina, and I hope you will answer my letters.'

'My uncle will answer for me; I can't write.'

'My dear child! how can you hope to become the wife of a Venetian if you cannot write?'

'Is it necessary for a woman? I know how to read.'

'That is not enough; and you must learn before coming to Venice, or you will be laughed at.'

'But none of the girls at home can write, and I cannot possibly learn in eight days.'

'I undertake to teach you in fifteen,' said her uncle, 'if you will try with all your might to learn.'

'It is a great undertaking, but I promise you to study day and night. I will begin to-morrow.'

After supper I suggested to the priest that he should remain all night at the inn, and leave very early in the morning. As he saw his niece was terribly tired, and would be glad of the rest, he acquiesced. I called up the landlady and ordered her to light a fire in another room, and prepare a bed for me; but here the holy father interposed and said it was not necessary; there were two large beds in the room where we were. I could have one, and the other would do for himself and his niece.

'We shall not undress,' said he, 'but you may, as you do

not leave with us in the morning. You can remain in bed as long as you please.'

'Oh,' said Cristina, 'I must undress, or I shall not sleep; but I shall not keep you waiting, I shall be ready in a quarter of an hour.'

I said nothing, but I could hardly hide my surprise at the charming Cristina's complaisance. My carnal mind was shocked; yet not only did the priest see no harm in it, but he never for one moment imagined that any one else could. I was not so hardened then, but as I have advanced in age and experience I have seen like customs current in many countries among good simple people, without detriment to their excellent morality. Still I must repeat, these customs obtained among good simple people only, and I do not pretend to be of their number.

'Do you know,' said he, 'what my niece wants to persuade me to do? To go home by myself to-morrow, and leave her here until the day after, when I shall come back for the diamond. She says that you are like a brother to her, only I fear she will be in your way.'

This unexpected proposition had such an effect on me, my nose began to bleed violently, and bled for a quarter of an hour, so that the good priest was scared out of his wits.

I was very discreet after the priest left us. I told Cristina little naughty stories, carefully modifying them so as not to startle her, but I was amused to see that when she did not understand, she pretended she did, so as not to appear too naïve.

We went to our beds about midnight; I did not awake until broad daylight, the priest had slipped away so quietly I had not heard him.

I called out 'good morning' to Cristina, who awoke, and, leaning on her elbow, smiled.

'I did not hear my uncle go,' she said.

'My dear child, you look as pretty as an angel; I am dying to give you a kiss.'

'Come and give me one!' Then, after a pause, she said softly, 'What will my uncle say?'

'He will know nothing about it until he has given us the nuptial blessing in his parish church.'

'But we cannot be married in Lent?'

'I will get a dispensation.'

'How long will it be before we can be married?'

'About a month.' This seemed to reassure her, and she was soon smiling again.

But although the bond into which we had entered was not altogether displeasing to me, I could have wished for just a little more time. The little hint of remorse that had leaped up in my soul, full of love and good intentions as that soul was, went twisting and twining about there like a serpent, and saddened me. But yet I felt sure that this sweet woman would never repent having met me.

After breakfast we went to Mass, and the morning passed by very rapidly. In the evening I took her to the play, and to the Casino, after having provided her with a domino and mask. She had never seen a gaming-table before. I gave her ten sequins, telling her how to stake them. In less than an hour she had won over a hundred, then I made her come away. She could hardly believe that all that money belonged to her. 'What will my uncle say?' she kept repeating.

When he returned next morning she showed him her treasure, and he was profuse in his exclamations of delight and surprise. He thanked God, for what he called a miracle, and concluded that we were destined for one another.

The time had come for us to separate. I promised to visit them at the beginning of Lent, but only on condition that they would not mention my name to any of their friends. When I had seen them off, I turned my steps towards Venice, very much in love, and determined not to break faith with my dear Cristina.

But alas! the very next day I decided she must be happy without me. I had intended to marry her when I loved her more than I loved myself, but as soon as I was away from

her side I found that self-love was stronger than the affection with which she had inspired me. Still I felt sentimental about her. I trembled at the idea of abandoning this naïve and innocent creature, and shuddered to think that her confidence in me might be repaid with lifelong opprobrium and scorn. I would find her a husband at once—one who should be in every way preferable to myself.

My three excellent friends had been somewhat anxious about me during my absence: they were all eager to consult me on divers matters. As soon as I was closeted with them, pen in hand, I put a question of my own to *Paralis*, as we called our oracle. The answer I received to my question ran in this wise: 'Confide in *Serenus;* tell him the whole story.' *Serenus* was the cabalistic name of M. de Bragadin. The worthy man was most obedient, and always did what *Paralis* told him.

'You must,' said *Paralis*, 'obtain a dispensation from the Holy Father in favour of a very good girl, so that she may publicly celebrate her marriage during Lent, and in her parish church. Here is her certificate of baptism.' I had brought it away with me, and now slipped it into M. de Bragadin's hand. 'The bridegroom is as yet unknown, but that does not matter, *Paralis* will point him out when the time comes.'

'Rely on me,' gravely replied my adopted father; 'I will write to-morrow to our ambassador at Rome. *Paralis* shall be obeyed, and I foresee that the husband is to be one of us four; we must dispose ourselves to fulfil his command.'

I could hardly help laughing when I saw that it was absolutely in my power to make Cristina a Venetian lady and wife of a nobleman and senator. But I resisted, and again consulted the oracle, as to who was to be the happy man. The reply came that M. Dandolo was to find him; that he must be young, handsome, sensible, and capable of serving the republic; that no engagements were to be made without consulting me. I added that the girl had a dowry of four

thousand ducats, and that we had fifteen days to find the man.

I was now quite easy, for I was sure they would find a husband such as I desired for Cristina. I set about keeping the carnival with a light heart, and won over a thousand sequins at faro, with which I paid my debts, and the cost of the dispensation, which arrived ten days later from Rome.

It was all in form; nothing was wanting but a mere detail—the bridegroom. I wrote to the uncle to meet me at Treviso, and was not surprised to see him arrive accompanied by his niece. I gave him the Papal dispensation, and as I was sure of nothing, did not mention the proposed change of bridegroom. On this occasion we occupied separate rooms, and as I now looked on Cristina as belonging to some other man, I contented myself with discreetly embracing her in the presence of her uncle. He left us alone together for some time, as he had business to attend to, and I endured all the temptations of Saint Anthony, but I resisted them manfully. A week later M. Dandolo told me the husband was found, and that he was sure I would approve of his choice. As a matter of fact, when I met the young man I found him worthy of the senator's eulogiums. His name was Charles ——; he was very handsome, about twenty-two years of age, and a godson of Count Algarotti's, the friend and relative of M. Dandolo's.

I had now reached the most delicate and difficult part of the undertaking. I wrote to the priest, telling him that on a certain day I would pay him and his niece a visit, and would bring a friend with me. At the appointed time Charles and I set out. On the way I explained to him that I had met the young person and her uncle about a month before, and that I should have proposed to her myself, but that I did not consider my situation justified me in doing so. In this way I prepared his mind for the coming event. We arrived at the presbytery about two hours before midday. Cristina came smiling to meet us.

'I want to show you my handwriting,' she said, 'and after that we will go and see my mother.'

Charles asked her why she had waited till she was nineteen to learn to write. 'What is that to you?' she said tartly; 'and I am not nineteen, only seventeen.'

Then we two followed her to her own home. We found the doctor with her mother, who was bedridden, and, oddly enough, he knew Charles. They went out together, leaving me with the mother and daughter, and I spoke of Charles, praising his good conduct, morality, and intelligence, vaunting the happiness of the woman whom he should choose as his wife. They agreed with me that his face was a guarantee of all I alleged.

As there was no time to lose, I told Cristina that she must be on her guard at table, as it was possible that he might be the husband Heaven had destined for her.

'If it should be so,' I added, 'you will be very happy with him, happier than you would have been with me, and as the doctor knows him, he can tell you more about him than I have time to tell you now.'

It gave me much pain to make this declaration; but imagine my surprise! The young girl was calm, and in no wise disconcerted. The sight of her tranquillity checked the tears I was prepared to shed. After a pause she asked me if I was quite sure that that handsome young fellow really cared to marry her. This question reassured me. I saw I had been as much mistaken in her as she had been in me.

We dined rather late, and I carefully refrained from talking, so as to give Charles a fair chance. I noticed with pleasure that Cristina replied to him with ease and interest. When they parted Charles said to her, 'You are worthy of a prince.'

'I shall consider myself lucky,' she replied, 'if you think me worthy of you.'

On our return journey Charles spoke of nothing but his good luck; he was over head and ears in love.

'I shall go,' said he, 'to Count Algarotti to-morrow, and

you can write to her uncle to bring us over the documents to sign.'

Two days after, I went back to the village. This time I read the future bride a little lecture, at once paternal and sentimental, with regard to her conduct in her new state of life. I told her how to behave towards her husband, his aunt, and her sister-in-law, so as to win their affection and friendship. The end of my discourse was somewhat pathetic and a little humiliating for myself, for in recommending her to be faithful to Charles I had to ask her to forgive my own betrayal of her.

'When you asked me to marry you, did you not intend to do so?' she said.

'Yes, certainly.'

'You have not deceived me, then, and I ought to be grateful to you for being strong enough to decide that as there might have been difficulties about our union, it was better to find me another husband. Now, you may kiss me if you like.'

'No, I dare not!'

'Very well, my friend, really I don't care about it!'

This naïve reasoning made me smile, and an hour or two later we all three left for Venice, Cristina wearing her grandest toilette; the marriage-contract was signed, and the wedding-day fixed. The marriage feast was spread at the uncle's house; Count Algarotti sent his servants and cook from Venice, so that everything might be done as was fitting. Cristina, though dressed as a peasant, looked beautiful as a star; her uncle and husband had tried in vain to induce her to wear the costume of a Venetian lady.

'When I am your wife,' she told Charles, 'I will dress as you wish, but till then I will wear what I have always worn. I do not want the girls with whom I have been brought up to laugh at me, or think I am giving myself airs.'

We went to the church about eleven, and were surprised to find it so crowded we could with difficulty get places. The whole village and many of the Trevisan nobility were there,

to see the peasant girl whose wedding was celebrated in mid-Lent; every one was loud in the praise of both bride and bridegroom, and certainly they made a handsome couple.

At the banquet which followed the ceremony Cristina proved an admirable hostess; she glanced from time to time at her husband to see if what she said and did met with his approbation, and needless to say, these glances were always met with a reassuring smile.

The next morning I was talking with Count Algarotti and some of his friends when Charles came in, looking happy and radiant. He replied with much wit, and *à propos* to the jokes with which he was greeted, and I must own I felt considerably relieved when he came up to me and embraced me heartily; he begged me to henceforth consider him as a brother, and to treat his house as my own; but, though I knew the invitation was sincere, I avoided accepting it. About a year after their marriage a son was born to them; they had two other children, and lived in happiness and comfort for many years.

CHAPTER IX

HENRIETTE

AMONG my most intimate friends at this period was a young man who was studying mathematics under the celebrated Professor Succi. His name was Tognolo, but he had changed this ill-sounding appellation for that of de Fabris: it was he who afterwards became Count de Fabris, lieutenant-general to Joseph the Second.

I used to go with my friend de Fabris to stay at a country house near Zero, where everything was arranged for the amusement of body and mind. We gambled, we made love, but above all, we played practical jokes of the most terrible description on one another. A man must never lose his temper, but take everything as a jest, or be dubbed a fool and a disagreeable fellow. It was a series of practical jokes: apple-pie beds, turnip-lanthorns, ghosts, and other things still harder to bear. I had to run the gauntlet with the others, but one day they played a trick on me which was really too bad, and its regrettable consequences put an end to this mania for horse-play. We used to walk every day to a farm, about half a mile distant from the château, and as a short-cut we generally passed over a deep muddy ditch crossed by a single plank. I always chose this way for the sake of watching the simulated terror of the women, and the pleasure of handing them across. One day when I was standing in the middle of the plank, encouraging them to follow me, the plank broke, and I was flung into the stinking mud, up to my chin. In spite of my mortification I had to laugh with the others. I was helped out by the farmer, and a pitiable object I must have presented: my beautiful

new suit embroidered with spangles, my lace, my silk stockings, all were spoilt. The next day I had to go to town to get new things, and returned in twenty-four hours; but de Fabris told me that the author of the trick had not come forward.

A sequin given adroitly here and there put me in possession of the secret. My tormentor was a Greek merchant, named Demetrio, a man of about forty-five, a good amiable fellow, who owed me a grudge for cutting him out in the affections of a pretty waiting-maid. I meditated revenge, and a funeral which occurred just then in the village prompted me.

Armed with my hunting-knife, I went alone to the cemetery at midnight; I disinterred the corpse, cut off one of its arms, rearranged the grave, and went off to my room with the severed arm.

Next night I retired early, and hid myself under Demetrio's bed. Presently he came in, undressed, put out his light, and disposed himself to slumber.

By and by I began to pull at the bedclothes; gently he recovered them, saying laughingly: 'Whoever you are, go away, and leave me to sleep, I do not believe in ghosts. You will get no fun out of me.'

I waited five or six minutes, and then began again, but this time, when he attempted to pull the coverings into place, I tugged them in the opposite direction.

He sat up and tried to seize hold of the hand which was pulling the blanket; as he grabbed for it I substituted the dead hand for mine. Thinking he had caught the man or woman who was teasing him, he drew it towards him. I held tight for a minute or two, then suddenly let go, and the Greek fell back on his pillow, grasping the ice-cold hand; he did not say a word.

The farce was played, I walked softly to the door, regained my own room, and got into bed.

Next morning I was awakened by the sound of people running up and down the corridor. On going to my door, I

met the mistress of the house, who told me that I had gone a bit too far this time.

'What is the matter?'

'M. Demetrio is dying.'

'I am sorry, but I did not kill him.'

She left me without answering, and I dressed myself hurriedly, feeling somewhat scared. I went to the Greek's room; the whole household was assembled there, and they greeted me with violent reproaches. I feigned innocence, but no one believed me; the priest, who had been fetched in haste, told me I had committed a crime.

'There is no one else here,' said he, 'capable of such an abomination. No one else would have dared to do it. I must warn you that action will be taken against you at once.'

The same day the arm was re-inhumed, and I was formally denounced to the Episcopal court at Treviso for having violated a tomb.

I was so bored by their reproaches that I went back to Venice, and after being there a short time I learnt that the unfortunate Greek had recovered sufficiently to be able to open and shut his eyes, but that he had entirely lost the use of his limbs, and could only speak in a spasmodic and semi-idiotic manner. In this sad condition he passed the rest of his life. His unhappy fate pained me deeply, but I had not meant to injure him, and the trick he played on me might easily have cost me my life, so I consoled myself. There was no proof against me, they only surmised that it was I who had opened the grave. But I was not at the end of my troubles.

Just at this time a woman lodged a complaint against me for assaulting her daughter, and though I was blameless, it was difficult for me to prove my innocence. It was one of those cases which are got up to cause expense and annoyance to the victim; the harpy's evident intention was to blackmail me, and her accusations were difficult to refute. These, coming on the top of the charge for profanation of the dead, made matters very serious. M. de Bragadin, whose

advice was always worth listening to, counselled me to lose no time in leaving Venice; at the same time he assured me that in a year at most I should be able to return, for by then the scandal would be forgotten.

I left at nightfall, and next day I slept at Verona; two days afterwards I arrived at Milan. I was alone, but well supplied with everything; no letters of introduction, but plenty of handsome jewellery, a well-filled purse, good health, and the burden of twenty-three years.

I passed some time agreeably at Milan, where I met several old acquaintances; I was lucky at cards, and had many adventures, one of which led me to Cesena, whence I intended going on to Naples.

While staying at Cesena, I was awakened one morning by a terrific noise outside my room.

I opened my door and looked out, and saw a posse of policemen standing round an open door, through which I could discern a bed, with a man sitting up in it, vociferating loudly in Latin.

I asked the host what was the matter.

'This gentleman,' he answered, 'has a girl with him, and the bishop's archers have come to know if it is his wife. It is simple enough, if she is his wife he has only to produce his marriage certificate; if not, he must make up his mind to go to prison with her. But I would settle the whole thing for three sequins; I need only speak to the chief, and he would withdraw his men. If you know Latin, go in and explain matters to him.'

'Who forced the door of the room?'

'It was not forced, I opened it; it was my duty to do so.'

I determined to interfere. I went in in my night-cap and explained to the man why these people were annoying him; he answered me, laughing the while, that it was impossible for any one to know if the person who was with him was a man or a woman, as his companion wore, like himself, an officer's uniform. Saying this, he drew out a passport and presented it to me; it was signed by Cardinal Albani, and

made out in the name of an officer, captain in the Empress of Austria's Hungarian regiment; he said he came from Rome, and was going on to Parma with despatches.

'Captain,' said I in Latin, 'I beg you to let me settle this affair for you; I will go to the bishop and tell him how vilely his people have behaved to you.'

I was furious at the way in which an infamous and mercenary police had dared to treat an honourable stranger, and I must also own that I was burning with curiosity to see the fair cause of all the disturbance.

As I could get no satisfaction from the bishop, I presented myself to General Spada, who was in command of the town. The worthy soldier, who preferred that priests should busy themselves with the affairs of heaven and not of this world, was indignant, and promised me that in a few hours justice should be done. In the meanwhile he sent his adjutant back to the hotel with me, with orders to dismiss the police immediately.

Through the open door of the room I conversed with the captain, and asked him if I might breakfast with him.

'Ask my friend,' he said.

'Charming person, whom I have not the honour of knowing,' I said in French, 'may I make a third at your table?'

The sweetest, freshest, smiling face, with untidy locks under a man's cap, showed itself and replied gaily that I should be welcome. I went away to order breakfast. An hour later I followed the waiter into the room, and we breakfasted.

The mysterious companion was an exceedingly pretty Frenchwoman, whose natural charms were hardly obscured by the elegant blue uniform she wore. Her protector was over sixty, whereas I was only twenty-three, and I could not help thinking they were a rather ill-assorted couple, the more so that she spoke neither German, Hungarian, nor Latin, and he did not know a word of French.

Determined to push the adventure further, I asked the captain if he meant to post to Parma. On his replying in

the affirmative I begged him to accept two places in my travelling carriage.

'I should be delighted,' he said, 'but you must first ask Henriette.'

'Will you, madame, do me the honour of travelling with me to Parma?'

'With the greatest pleasure, for at least we shall be able to converse, and I have been deprived of that pleasure for some time.'

My carriage, so far, existed only in my imagination, but after supper I went out to see what I could do. I found a superb English carriage, which must have cost at least two hundred guineas, and before dinner next day I had concluded a bargain with its owner. The honest captain insisted on paying me the price of a post-chaise to Parma, and this settled we started on our journey.

The one drawback to my satisfaction was that the poor Hungarian could take no part in our conversation. Whenever the charming Frenchwoman said anything amusing I tried to translate it to him in Latin, but I saw that his face grew longer and longer. I concluded that I did not speak Latin as well as she spoke French. In every language the last thing one learns is humour. I could not laugh at the jokes in Terence, Plautus, and Martial until I was thirty.

She was the first Frenchwoman I had ever spoken to, and she spoke very gracefully, and like a lady, and yet I knew she must be an adventuress! I hoped so, for my ambition was now to steal her from the old gentleman—with all possible regard for his feelings, true; for I had a great respect for the fine old soldier that he was. She was certainly a very odd woman. She wore men's clothes, she had no luggage, no feminine fripperies, not even a chemise—she wore the captain's shirts. The whole situation was enigmatical enough, and that is what charmed me.

At Bologna we had a capital supper, and they lighted a large wood fire for us. When we were seated round it I plucked up courage to ask her how she had become the

companion of the good fellow who seemed more suited to be her father than her lover.

'If you want to know,' she answered laughing, 'get him to tell you the story himself, but be sure that he leaves nothing out.'

When the captain was convinced that she did not mind his speaking freely, he spoke as follows:—

'I had six months' leave, and I went wtih a friend to pass them in Rome, thinking that every one in decent society there would speak Latin. I was disagreeably surprised, for even the ecclesiastics could only write it passably, and not speak it at all. I had been boring myself thus for a month, when Cardinal Albani gave me some despatches for Parma. I made an excursion to Civita Vecchia before leaving for Parma, and as I was walking on the quay I saw an old officer and this young lady, dressed as you see her now, step out of a boat. Her appearance pleased me, but I should not have thought of her a second time if she and her companion had not taken rooms in my hotel. Our windows faced each other, and I could see them at supper, one on each side of the table, eating in perfect silence. By and by she got up and left the room; the officer remained reading a letter which appeared to interest him deeply. The next day I saw him go out, and the girl remained alone in the room. I sent my servant to her with a message, telling her that if she would grant me a *rendezvous*, I would give her ten sequins. She sent back word that she was leaving after breakfast for Rome, but that it would be easy for me to speak to her there, if I still wished it.

'I returned to Rome and thought no more of the fair adventuress, when, two days before leaving the City, my servant told me he had seen her again, and had found out where she was lodging, always with the same old officer. I told him to try and get speech of her, and tell her I was leaving Rome the next day. She replied that if I would let her know the hour of my departure, she would meet me outside the city, and would get into the carriage with me. I

told her, through my servant, the day and hour I was leaving, and the gate through which I should pass. She was there to the moment, got into my carriage, and we have never left each other since. She gave me to understand that she wanted to go to Parma with me, that she had business there, and that she would never go back to Rome. You may imagine what difficulty we had in explaining ourselves. I could not even tell her that if she was followed and taken from me by violence, I could not protect her. I have not the slightest idea who or what she is. She says her name is Henriette; she may or may not be French; she is as gentle as a lamb, and seems to have had a good education; she is strong and healthy; she is witty and courageous both, as she has testified. If she will tell you her story, and let you translate it to me in French, it will please me immensely, for I am sincerely her friend, and shall be very sorry when we part at Parma. Tell her, I beg you, that I shall make her a present of thirty sequins, and that if I were rich I would give her more.'

When I translated the captain's speech to Henriette she blushed, but frankly confirmed what he had said.

'Tell him,' she said, 'that the same principle which prevents me from lying prevents me from speaking the truth. As to the thirty sequins, please to assure him that I shall not accept one, that he will only distress me if he insists. When we get to Parma, I want him to bid me good-bye, and let me go where it seems best to me, without inquiring where that may be, and if he should meet me by chance, let him add to his kindness by not appearing to recognise me.'

The poor captain was somewhat mortified by this little speech, and asked me to tell her that before he could agree to her request he must be certain that she had all she wanted.

'You can say,' said she, 'that he need have no uneasiness on my account.'

After this conversation we remained silent for a time, and then I rose and wished them good night. Henriette blushed crimson.

'Who can this girl be,' I spoke aloud in my room, 'who combines the purest sentiments with all the appearances of the most cynical freedom? Has she a lover or a husband waiting for her at Parma? Does she belong to some honourable family there? Did she confide herself to the captain only to escape from the officer at Rome? She must know my reason for travelling with them, and if she tries to play the prude I will not be her dupe.'

The next day, the accommodating captain having by my desire given us an opportunity for *tête-à-tête*, I asked her if the order she had imposed on him applied to me equally.

'It was not a command,' she replied; 'I have no right to command. It is a request. I merely asked him to do me this service, and if you have any friendship for me you will do as I know he will do.'

'Madame,' I said, 'what you ask might be possible to a Frenchman, but not to an Italian. I could not live in the same town with you and not speak to you. It remains for you to say whether I shall go on with you or remain here. If you say I may travel with you I warn you I shall not be content till I have wrested from you an avowal of something warmer than friendship. Do not be afraid of hurting the feelings of your friend; he knows what I feel for you, and he will be thankful to leave you in such safe hands as mine. Why do you smile?'

'Fancy making any woman such a declaration as this, at the point of the sword as it were, instead of softly, tenderly, insinuatingly—— Ah! ah!' She laughed.

'Yes, I know I am neither tender, nor gallant, nor pathetic; I am passionate. Come, there is no time to lose!'

'Travel with us to Parma,' she said.

I was kissing her hand when the captain came in. He congratulated us with a good grace. Later in the day we arrived at Reggio; he took me aside and told me he thought it better that he should go on to Parma alone, we could follow in a day or two. He left us to our mutual happiness. It was not until a week or so later that I ventured to ask

Henriette what she would have done in Parma, without money and without friends. She owned that she would have been much embarrassed, but added that she knew I cared for her, and would see that she came to no harm. She added that I must not think ill of her, for all that had happened to her was the fault of her husband and her father-in-law, both of whom she declared to be monsters.

I passed at Parma as Farussi—it was my mother's maiden name—and Henriette wrote herself down as Anne d'Arci, Frenchwoman. We took rooms at d'Andremont's hotel, and I engaged a young French servant to wait on us. Parma was then under the ferule of a new government. I felt as if I were no longer in Italy, there was an ultramontane air over everything. French and Spanish were spoken in the streets, while people whispered in Italian.

I entered a mercer's shop at haphazard, and addressed myself to the stout lady behind the counter.

'Madam,' I said, 'I want to make some purchases.'

'I will send some one to you who speaks French,' she answered.

'No need of that, I am an Italian.'

'God be praised! It is rare thing to meet one in these days.'

'Why rare?'

'Do you not know that Don Philip is here, and that his wife, Madame de France, is on the way?'

'I congratulate you, it must be good for trade.'

'That is true, but everything is dear, and we cannot accustom ourselves to the new ways, which are a bad mixture of French liberty and Spanish tyranny. What do you wish to purchase?'

'Let me first tell you I never bargain, but if you overcharge me I shall not come back. I want some fine linen to make twenty-four chemises, some dimity for petticoats and stays, some muslin and batiste for handkerchiefs, and many other things which I shall not find in your shop, but which

I wish you kept, for, being a stranger, God knows into whose hands I shall fall.'

'If you trust me, you will fall into good hands.'

'Well then, tell me where to find sempstresses who will make up these materials, and where I can buy dresses, caps, and mantles; everything, in short, that a lady requires.'

'If she has money you will have no difficulty. Is she young?'

'She is four years younger than I am, and she is my wife.' I took the best of everything she had, paid for it, gave her my address, and begged her to send me the dressmaker and milliner at once. On the way back to the hotel I bought some silk and thread stockings, and ordered a shoemaker to follow me.

What a delicious moment! I had told Henriette nothing about my intended purchases, and she surveyed them with an air of perfect satisfaction, but without excessive demonstration, though she proved her gratitude by the delicate manner in which she praised the beauty of the stuff I had bought. There was no increase of gaiety on her part, but an air of tenderness which was better than all.

The valet whom I hired came in with the dressmakers, and Henriette told him quietly to wait in the hall until he was called; a quarter of an hour after, he followed the shoemaker into the room, and stood about familiarly listening to our conversation; she asked him again what he wanted.

'I want to know which of you two I am to obey?' he answered.

'Neither of us,' I said, laughing. 'There is your day's wages, and begone!'

The dressmaker then proposed her own son as our valet. His name was Caudagna.

My father was a native of Parma, and one of his sisters married a Caudagna. 'It would be amusing,' I said to myself, 'if the dressmaker turns out to be my aunt, and my valet to be my first cousin! I will keep my own counsel.'

Just as we were sitting down to table, the good Hungarian captain came in, and Henriette, running up to him, called him her 'dear papa.' We dined delicately. I saw that Henriette was dainty, and that the captain was a *fin gourmet;* I was both. The captain was overjoyed at having placed his little adventuress so well.

In the evening, while we were supping *en tête-à-tête,* I thought I saw just a shade of sadness come over Henriette's pretty face: when I asked the reason, she replied in a voice which went straight to my heart—

'My friend, you are spending a great deal of money for me. I hope it is not with the intention of making me care more for you? I love you no better than I did yesterday, but I love you with all my heart; whatever you get for me beyond the strictly necessary only pleases me inasmuch as it proves you think of me, but if you are not very rich, think how bitterly I shall have to reproach myself by and by!'

'Ah, my angel!' I answered, 'let me for the moment believe that I am rich, and believe yourself that it is impossible for you to ruin me. Think of nothing, except that you will never leave me, promise me that.'

'I would that I could, but who can count on the future? Are you free? Are you dependent on any one?'

'I am free in every sense of the word.'

'I congratulate you, and I rejoice for you, but alas! I cannot say as much; I know that at any moment I may be discovered, and torn from your arms.'

'You frighten me! Do you think this misfortune will come to us here?'

'No, unless I am seen by some one who knows me.'

'Are you afraid of being overtaken by the officer whom you abandoned at Rome?'

'Not in the least, he is my father-in-law, and I am sure he has not taken any steps to find out where I am! he is only too thankful to be rid of me. I acted in the mad manner you know of because he was going to put me into a convent, which would not have been to my taste. As for the

rest, dear friend, do not ask me to tell it you; my history is, and must remain, a mysterious one.'

'I will respect your desire for secrecy, my angel; only love me, and let me love you, without any fear of the future troubling our present happiness.'

We spent three months at Parma in perfect felicity.

One day while I was looking over some books in the French library, I made the acquaintance of a little hunchbacked French gentleman, whose conversation I found exceedingly witty and amusing. I may here remark that it is rare to meet a stupid hunchback; my experience of them has been the same in every country in the world. This particular one, whose name was Dubois-Chateleraux, was, as I have said, no exception to the rule; he was an expert engraver, and director of the Mint to the Infant Duke of Parma. I passed an hour with him, and invited him to visit us at our hotel, and from that day forth he became a frequent guest at our table.

My happiness was too perfect to last long, but I was, in a manner, the instrument of my own undoing, for if I had not introduced the fatal hunchback to Henriette, our lot might have been different.

I wanted to take Henriette to the opera, for music was her passion. Yet she was afraid to be seen by people, so I took an out of the way box on the second row; but pretty women are soon found out everywhere. She looked over the visitors' list, and said she knew no one in it. She wore no rouge, and we had no light in the box. Dubois came in, but I did not present him. All the same, he came to see us next day. She offered him coffee, and refrained from sugar, though she always took it, *à la Française*. This was to put Dubois on a wrong scent. She made as if she enjoyed the bitter cup, and I laughed. The hunchback was very curious, and earnestly begged Henriette to go to Court. She said she was too delicate to stand the fatigue. Then he asked us to supper at his house by ourselves. But when we arrived there

the room was full. Henriette bit her lip, but all went off well.

Henriette and I were less careful after this; she really only feared the nobility. One day, outside the gate of Colorno, we met the duke and his spouse coming in. Their carriage was followed by another containing Dubois and M. Dutillot, the French minister, and our horses fell down just as we passed them, and he came to the side of our carriage and asked if madame had been much frightened. She merely inclined her head and we passed on, but the harm was done.

Next day Dubois came from the French minister with a request to be presented to the lady.

'Does he know me?' she said.

'No, madame,' said the hunchback, 'he does not.'

'Then what would he think of me if I received him? I am not an adventuress, and I cannot have the honour.' Dubois was silent.

The Court was now at Colorno, and was about to give a superb fête; the gardens of the palace were to be splendidly illuminated and opened to the public, so that every one might promenade in them. Dubois had talked so much of this fête that the desire seized us to be present with the rest of the world. He went with us, and we took rooms at the inn at Colorno for a week. Towards the evening of the first day, as we were strolling in the gardens, we met the royal party, followed by their suite.

Madame de France, according to the usage of the Court at Versailles, saluted Henriette without stopping as we passed. Henriette courtesied. My eyes fell on a handsome young cavalier who was walking by the side of Don Louis, and who looked fixedly at my companion. By and by we met this same cavalier a second time; he bowed to us, and going up to Dubois spoke to him in a low voice; they stepped to one side and remained talking together for at least a quarter of an hour. As we were leaving the gardens this gentleman came up again, and after politely begging my

pardon, asked Henriette if he had not the honour of her acquaintance.

'I do not remember ever having had the pleasure of seeing you,' she answered coldly.

'Enough, madame, I entreat you to forgive me.'

Dubois told us the gentleman, whose name was d'Antoine, was an intimate friend of the Infant Don Louis, and that thinking he knew Henriette, he had begged Dubois to present him. The hunchback replied that Henriette's name was d'Arci, and that if he knew her he had no need of an introduction. This answer seemed to disconcert him a little.

Henriette seemed uneasy, and I asked her if her failure to recognise d'Antoine was not a pretence.

'By no means,' she answered; 'I know his name, which is that of an illustrious family in Provence, but I have never seen him before to-day.'

I could see she was anxious, and we gave up our rooms and returned to Parma the next day. In the afternoon my servant brought me a letter, saying that the courier who delivered it was waiting for an answer in the ante-chamber.

'That letter troubles me,' I said to Henriette. She took it and read it. It ran as follows, and was addressed to M. de Farussi:—

'Will you grant me a few moments' interview, either at your house or at my house, or wherever it may please you to appoint? I must speak to you on a subject which will interest you deeply.—I have the honour to remain, Yours, etc. etc.,

'D'Antoine.'

I sent back word that I would be in the ducal gardens at a certain hour, and there I found M. d'Antoine awaiting me.

'I was obliged,' said he, 'to ask you to meet me, as I could think of no other safe way of transmitting this letter to Madame d'Arci; it is of the greatest importance, and I beg you to forgive me for handing it you sealed. If you are

really her friend the contents of the letter will interest you both. May I count on your giving it to her?'

'Yes, sir,' I answered, 'on my honour.'

With a heart full of misgiving I repeated to Henriette what M. d'Antoine had said; at the same time I gave her the letter. She read it attentively, but with visible emotion.

"My friend,' she said, 'you must not be hurt if I do not show you this letter; the honour of two families is at stake. I shall have to receive this M. d'Antoine, who says he is a relation of mine.'

'This then,' cried I, 'is the beginning of the end! Why did I ever let that wretched Dubois into the house?'

'You must trust me!' said she. 'M. d'Antoine knows all my affairs; he is an honest man, he will do nothing except by my consent. Still, my dearest, circumstances may occur, we may be forced to consider a separation as a prudential measure, and you must strengthen me in my resolve, if necessary. But trust me to take care of the portion of happiness fate has given me in you—to do my best to make it last.'

I obeyed her, but from that moment a touch of sadness began tc enter into the quality of our love, and melancholy is fatal to love. Often we sat opposite each other for hours without speaking, and could not conceal the sighs that would come.

I followed her instructions exactly, and when M. d'Antoine arrived next day, withdrew to my room on the pretence of letters to write; but my door remained open, and I could see them both reflected in the mirror over my chimney-piece. They were together for six hours, writing and talking, but as I could not hear what they said, I suffered tortures!

As soon as the terrible d'Antoine had done my beloved Henriette came to me.

'My friend, can we leave here to-morrow?'

'Good heavens! yes, we can do whatever you say we must; but where shall I take you?'

'Where you will, but we shall have to return here in fifteen days. I have given my word to be here to receive the reply to a letter I have written. It is not that I wish to leave from fear of violence, but because I cannot endure the place now.'

On the morrow we left, and went to Milan, where we remained for a fortnight, seeing no one but a tailor and a dressmaker. I made Henriette a farewell gift, and one which she valued highly: it was a cloth pelisse lined with beautiful lynx fur. She never questioned me as to the state of my exchequer, and I did not let her know how near it was to depletion. We had lived so extravagantly, that when we returned to Parma I had only three or four hundred sequins left.

The day after we got back she had another long conference with d'Antoine, during which our separation was definitely arranged; then she came to me, and told me we must part. For a long time we wept in silence.

'When must I leave you, O too dearly beloved one?'

'You must leave me as soon as we get to Geneva, where you will take me at once. Can you find me a trustworthy waiting-maid to-morrow, with whom I can travel till I reach my destination?'

We left Parma that night, and in five days arrived at Geneva, where we stayed at the Hôtel des Balances. The following day Henriette gave me a letter for M. Tronchin, the Genevese banker, who, when he had read it, handed me a thousand louis d'or, at the same time telling me he would furnish Henriette with a carriage and two responsible men. Word came to us in the evening that carriage and servants would be ready next day.

It was a terrible moment; we were rigid with grief, overcome by the most profound sorrow.

I broke the silence by telling her I would take Tronchin's carriage, and she must have mine, which was far more commodious.

'I consent,' she said, 'it will be a consolation to me to have something which was once yours.'

Saying this she put into my pocket five rolls of a hundred louis each, nor would she let me utter one word of protest.

'When once necessity has forced us apart, my only friend,' said she, 'do not seek for news of me, and if by chance, we should ever meet, pretend not to know me.'

She departed at break of day with her maid, a lackey, and a courier. I followed her with my eyes until I could no longer see the carriage, then I flung myself on my bed and wept till sleep mercifully came to my worn-out body.

Next day the postillion returned, bringing me a letter which contained the one sad word 'Adieu.'

On a window pane in my room I found these words, traced with the point of a diamond—

'Thou wilt forget Henriette too.'

I received one more letter from her, while I was at Parma. It ran as follows:—

'I have been forced to leave you, my only friend, but do not add to your grief by thinking of mine. Let us not waste time deploring our fate, let us rather imagine we have had an agreeable dream, and surely never did dream so delicious last so long! We can boast that we were perfectly happy for three whole months; how many mortals can say as much? Let us not forget each other, though we must never meet again. I know it will please you to hear that I have put my affairs in order, and that for the rest of my life I shall be as happy as it is possible for me to be, away from you. I do not even know who you are, but there is no one in the world so familiar with your every thought as I am. I shall never have another lover in my life, but in this you must not imitate me. I hope that you will love again, and that your good genius will help you to find another Henriette. Adieu, adieu.'

I did see her again fifteen years after.

I should certainly have died of grief and inanition, for I could not touch food, had not Henriette's tutor, De la Haye, forced his way into my room. He was alarmed at my appearance, and with reason, and he succeeded in persuading me to take some broth. He spent the remainder of the evening with me, talking about the life to come, the vanity of this world, and the wickedness of shortening the life which God has allotted us. I listened without replying, but I listened, and he was content with this small advantage.

From that moment he gained the most extraordinary ascendency over me; he never left me except for one hour in the morning, when he went to his devotions, and so strong was his influence that in a few weeks he had transformed me into almost as fervent a bigot as himself! I firmly believe that trouble and sickness had weakened my mind, and that I was incapable of reasoning. Be this as it may, in a few weeks I renounced all my former opinions, and firmly resolved to lead a totally different life.

He often spoke to me of a certain Baron Bavois of Lausanne, who was one of his converts, and to whom he was deeply attached.

This beloved proselyte, who was only twenty-five years old, had been abandoned by his family because of his change of religion: they were strict Calvinists. He had but seven sequins a month to live on, and without De la Haye's assistance would have been obliged to return to Lausanne. I was so touched by the virtue of this young martyr, who had given up everything to save his soul, that I wrote the most pathetic letters about my Tartufe and his pupil to my three good friends in Venice. I succeeded in communicating my enthusiasm to them, and M. de Bragadin bade me to return to Venice with De la Haye, who could live in his palace, saying at the same time that he would also undertake to find suitable employment for Bavois. This letter brought joy to the heart of De la Haye, and he then and there decided that he should go to Modena to meet his neophyte,

and that I should return to Venice, where they would both join me as soon as possible.

My dear old friends received me with open arms. An apartment was arranged for De la Haye in the de Bragadin palace, and two nice rooms were taken for Bavois in the immediate neighbourhood; these preparations completed we waited impatiently the arrival of the two elect.

My friends were naturally vastly and agreeably surprised at the prodigious change which had taken place in me. Every day I went to Mass, often to other services. I was never seen at the Casinos, and only at such cafés as were frequented by pious and prudent personages. I paid all my debts without asking help from M. de Bragadin; in short, my whole mode of life was so edifying, they could only bless the mysterious ways of Providence.

At the beginning of May De la Haye arrived with the son of his soul, as he called him. The Baron Bavois was very different from what I had expected in character and appearance. He was of medium height, handsome, with beautiful teeth and long fair hair carefully dressed and highly scented. He spoke well and sensibly, and seemed to be of unalterable good humour. I took him to his rooms, where he embraced me, and thanked me for all my goodness to him. I asked him how he intended to pass his time at Venice until some occupation was found for him.

'I hope,' said he, 'that we shall amuse ourselves together, for I fancy we must have many tastes in common.'

It did not take me long to make his acquaintance, and find out what those said tastes were. In less than eight days I knew him thoroughly. He loved women, wine, and play: religion he had none, and as he was no hypocrite he made no secret of it.

'But how,' I asked him, 'being what you are, did you impose upon De la Haye?'

'God forbid that I should impose upon any one. De la Haye knows quite well what my opinions are, but he has fallen in love with my soul, and intends to save it *malgré*

moi. He has certainly done me good, and I am grateful to him; for the rest he never worries me with doctrines or dissertations on my salvation, which I leave to God, who, like a kind, good Father, can manage that for me without his interference. We quite understand one another, and are very good friends.'

The amusing part of it was, that while I was studying Bavois, he, unconsciously, was recalling me to my senses, and I was beginning to blush at having been the dupe of a Jesuit, who, in spite of his rôle of good Christian, was an out and out humbug. He cared but for his own ease, and having reached an age when dissipation had lost its charm, he fascinated my simple friends. He spoke to them but of God, angels, and eternal glory; they were convinced that he was the hermit who had taught me the cabbala, and were distressed because I forbade them through the oracle itself ever to speak of my science to De la Haye. In this I was well inspired, for in less than three weeks the wily fox had gained such an influence over them that he fancied he no longer needed my recommendations. He had frequent interviews with them from which I was excluded, and was presented to many families into which I was not admitted. He so far presumed on his importance as to actually reprimand me once for passing the night away from home. As soon as I was alone with him I told him that he must never permit himself such a liberty again, for I would punish him in a way he little expected. A few days after this the oracle warned my friends never to do anything which *Valentine* (the cabbalistic name of De la Haye) might suggest to them without first consulting me as to its expediency.

Bavois entered the service of the French ambassador, which put an end to our till then frequent intercourse. The patricians and their families are not allowed to have anything to do with the households of the ministers of other countries. At the beginning of the carnival of 1750, I won three thousand ducats in a lottery. Besides this I had been winning heavily all the winter, so I felt I could not choose

a better moment for making my long-contemplated visit to France. My friend Baletti, the actor, had an engagement at the Italian theatre in Paris, where he was to dance, and play young lovers' parts. He left Venice before I did, but I was to join him at Reggio, on the first of June. I was well equipped, with plenty of money, and my success in France only depended on my own conduct.

I arrived at Lyons without any striking adventures. There I made the acquaintance of M. de Rochebaron, and at his house I met a person who obtained for me the favour of admission into the Society of Freemasons. Some months later, in Paris, I became Companion, and then Master of the Order.

A young man of good family, who wishes to travel and know the world, especially what is called the 'great world,' and who would avoid ever being placed in a position of inferiority, should be initiated in Freemasonry, if only to know superficially what Freemasonry is. It is a benevolent institution, which in certain times and certain places has been made subversive to good order, and the pretext for criminal actions. But, good God! what system has not been abused and perverted? Every man of any importance, whose social existence is marked by merit, knowledge, or fortune, can be a mason, and many are. How can one suppose that such men meet to conspire and plot against the well-being of governments, especially as they are bound by oath not to discuss religion or politics? Yet sovereigns think they are justified in proscribing, and Popes in excommunicating, them!

Nothing pleased me so much in France as the fine roads, the cleanliness of the inns, the excellent beds, the good food, and the promptitude with which one was served. In my time no one in France knew how to overcharge; it was a paradise for foreigners. It is true that the most odious acts of despotism, such as *lettres de cachet*, were sometimes committed, but it was kingly despotism. France is now under the despotism of the people. Is she any happier, I wonder?

CHAPTER X

FIRST VISIT TO PARIS

LIKE all foreigners of my time I was anxious to see the Palais Royal. I visited it the first morning after my arrival. The rather fine garden of this famous place was surrounded with high houses, the paths were bordered with tall trees, people walked about by the fountains, or stopped at the stalls to buy scent, tooth-picks, playthings, or the latest pamphlet. Men and women were taking their breakfast on the pavement before the cafés; I seated myself at a small table and ordered chocolate, which was abominable, although served in a superb silver cup. I asked the waiter if the coffee was better?

'Excellent,' he answered. 'I made it myself yesterday.'

I was not surprised after this to find it worse than the chocolate.

I asked if there was any news. He replied that the dauphiness had given birth to a son, whereupon an abbé seated at the next table to me said, 'Nonsense, it is a daughter.' A third person came up and said, 'I have just come from Versailles, and it is neither son nor daughter.' He then observed that I must be a foreigner. I was Italian, I said, and he began to talk about the Court, the town, and the theatres, and wound up by offering to show me over Paris.

I thanked him, and getting up walked away. The abbé joined me, and told me the names of the well-known people we met. We left the Palais Royal by the big gate, and came upon a crowd of people round a shop which bore the sign of 'The Civet Cat.'

'What is going on here?' I asked.

'All these people are waiting to have their snuff-boxes filled up.'

'Is it the only tobacconist's in the city?'

'Certainly not, but since the Duchesse de Chartres made it the fashion, no one will buy snuff anywhere else. She stopped her carriage here two or three times last week; that was enough to make it the rage. The good people of Paris are like that, the gods whom they adore are novelty and fashion. But it was really a ruse on her part. She wanted to make the fortune of this young bride, who sells the tobacco, and in whom she is interested. The king was coming back from hunting the other day, and suddenly fancied a glass of ratafia. He stopped at a little *cabaret* near the Neuilly barrier, and having taken one glass, asked for a second and a third, declaring it was the best ratafia he had ever tasted. Now the most brilliant equipages succeed each other at the door of that poor *cabaret;* the owner has grown rich, and is building a splendid house in the place of the old one.'

'It seems to me,' said I, 'that this appreciation of the king's judgment is a proof of the nation's affection.'

'Foreigners might be tempted to think so, those among us who reflect know it is only glitter and gilt. When the king comes to Paris every one cries out *Vive le roi!* because some one, a police agent probably, gives the signal, but the king himself knows what such cries are worth. He is not at his ease in Paris, and is far happier at Versailles surrounded by his five-and-twenty thousand soldiers, who would protect him against the fury of those same people should they one day take it into their heads to cry out *Meure le roi!* The French have never loved their kings, except Saint Louis, Louis Douze, and the great and good Henri Quatre.'

Chatting in this way, we arrived at Baletti's door, where we separated. I found his mother, the famous actress Silvia, in the midst of friends. She presented me to every one in turn.

The name of Crébillon struck me.

'What, sir!' said I, 'I am indeed fortunate. For eight

years you have charmed me, and I have longed to know you, will you deign to listen to me for a moment?' And I recited to him his beautiful tirade from *Zénobie et Radamiste*, which I had translated into Italian blank verse. He listened with evident delight, for he understood Italian as well as his own language, and when I had finished he recited the same scene in French. He was at this time eighty years old, a perfect Colossus, taller than I by three inches; he ate and drank well, talked amusingly, and was celebrated for his *bons mots;* yet he rarely went out, and received few people, as he was unhappy without his pipe, and the twenty odd cats who were his constant companions. Indeed he looked rather like a large cat himself, or a lion, which is much the same thing. He kept an old housekeeper, a cook, and a man-servant. His housekeeper managed everything for him, even his money, and gave him no account. He held the office of Royal Censor, and she read aloud the works submitted to him, stopping when she came to a passage which she thought merited his disapprobation; sometimes they disagreed on these passages, and then their disputes were most laughable. 'Come back next week, we have not had time to examine your manuscript,' I once heard her say to an author.

For a year I went to his house three times a week, and I learned from him all the French I know, but even he could not teach me to get rid of my Italian way of turning a phrase. I am quick enough to see this trick in others, but I cannot cure myself of it.

Crébillon had paid court to Louis Quinze for fifteen years, and he told me many a curious anecdote about him. He said the much talked of Siamese ambassadors were impostors subsidized by Madame de Maintenon; he also told me that he had never finished his tragedy of *Cromwell*, because the king had desired him not to employ his pen on such a scoundrel.

Catilina he considered the worst of his plays; he could only have made it good, he said, by showing Cæsar as a young man, which would have been as ridiculous as to put

Medea on the stage before she knew Jason. He praised Voltaire highly, but accused him of plagiarism; he said he had stolen the entire scene of the Senate from him. Voltaire was, according to him, a born historian, but he falsified history by filling it with tales and anecdotes so as to make it interesting.

Foreigners sometimes find Paris dull, for without letters and introductions one can go nowhere. I was fortunate in possessing good introductions, and in less than fifteen days I had the *entrée* to the most amusing society in the city.

I was introduced to Mlle. Le Fel, the popular actress and member of the Royal Academy of Music. When I paid my respects to her at her house I found her playing with three charming children.

'I adore them,' she said.

'They deserve your affection,' said I, 'for they are very beautiful, though very much unlike each other.'

'No wonder,' she said calmly. 'The eldest is the son of the Duc d'Anneci, the second is the son of the Comte d'Egmont, and the third owes his being to M. de Maisonrouge, who has just married Mlle. de Romainville.'

'I beg your pardon,' said I; 'I thought that you were their mother.'

'So I am.'

I was vexed at having made such a stupid mistake. I was new to Paris and Parisian ways. But there was a great deal of this sort of thing in a certain class. Two great lords, Boufflers and Luxembourg, had changed wives in all good fellowship, and the little Boufflers were called Luxembourgs, and the little Luxembourgs bore the name of Boufflers. The descendants of these triplets are still so known in France. People who knew the secret laughed, and the world went round the sun as usual.

I went to see *Les Fêtes Vénitiennes* at the opera. They had transposed the ducal palace and the clock tower, and this technical error made me laugh. But, being a Venetian, I

laughed still more to see the Doge and twelve of the Council dance a *passecaille* in comic togas.

All the Italian actors then in Paris received me with kindness, and entertained me sumptuously. The richest of them was Pantaloon, who was known to be a usurer. He was the father of two charming daughters, Coraline and Camille. Coraline was the favourite of the Prince of Monaco, the son of the Duc de Valentinois; and Camille was in love with the Comte de Melfort, the friend of the Duchesse de Chartres, since become Duchesse d'Orleans, by the death of her father-in-law.

Coraline was prettier than Camille, but not so lively. I paid my court to her at odd times, as became a man of no importance. Sometimes when I was there the prince would arrive. At first I used to withdraw discreetly when he appeared, but after a time I was asked to remain, and discovered that a prince is often much bored by a *tête-à-tête* with his mistress. We would sometimes sup together, and then his rôle was to listen, and mine to amuse.

The prince was always most amiable to me. One morning when I went in, he said: 'Ah! I am glad to see you, I promised the Duchesse de Rufé to present you to her; come, we will go there at once.'

What, another duchess! I was in luck. We got into a *devil*, as the then fashionable carriage was called, and arrived at the duchess's house at eleven o'clock in the morning.

Reader, if I gave you a faithful picture of this terrible woman, you would be horrified. Imagine an old, old face, like a death's-head, plastered with rouge, set on a lean figure, all skin and bone, the result of the accumulation of sixty winters. The hideous hag bade me sit on the sofa beside her, and paid me the most outrageous compliments. The smell of musk nearly made me sick. The prince, pretending he had business elsewhere, left us alone, and then her attentions became so pressing, that, snatching up my hat, I incontinently fled, trembling lest the porter should refuse to open the door to me.

I was wandering about the apartments at Fontainebleau one day, when I saw some ten or twelve women coming towards me. They walked so badly, leaning forward, as though at each step they must fall on their faces, that my curiosity was aroused. I asked who they were, and was told they were the queen's ladies-in-waiting, and that they walked in that manner because the heels of their shoes were six inches high. I followed them into a superb room, where several courtiers were assembled round an immense table, on which a place was laid for one person only. In a few minutes the Queen of France came in, very simply dressed, with no rouge on, her head covered with a great cap: she looked old and devout. She sat down to table, and two nuns presented to her a plate of fresh butter, for which she thanked them graciously. The courtiers ranged themselves in a semicircle ten steps away from the table, and I stood quietly among them. Her Majesty began to eat, keeping her eyes fixed on her plate; by and by, finding a dish to her taste, she asked for a second helping.

'M. de Löwendal!' she said.

A superb-looking man advanced, and made a low bow.

'Madame?'

'I think that this is fricasseed chicken?'

'I also am of that opinion, madame.'

After the remark, made in all gravity, the marshal stepped backwards to his place, and the queen continued to eat in silence. Then she returned to her apartment. I thought that if that was a sample of her meals, I was thankful I was not her guest.

I was glad to have seen the famous victor of Berg-op-Zoom, but it pained me that a great man should be obliged to pronounce sentence on a fricasseed chicken, as if it had been a question of state.

One morning, when I was thus standing in the hedge of courtiers, I saw a Venetian acquaintance, Madame Querini. She was leaning on the arm of the Marquis of Saint Simon, first gentleman of the Prince of Condé's household.

'Madame Querini at Fontainebleau!' I said, surprised.

'You here, Casanova! One remembers Queen Elizabeth's saying, "The poor we have always with us!" '

Her insolence was repaid her in full. The king's remark about her, which she must have heard as he passed with Richelieu, was, 'We can do better than that here in the way of looks!'

Poor Juliette Querini! She very nearly got hold of Saint Simon, who admired her, but she deceived him with false references and he never forgave her.

About this time the dauphiness gave birth to the Duke of Burgundy, and the rejoicings which took place seem to me incredible, when I look back on them to-day and see what the same nation has done with its king. The nation wishes to be free, and its ambition is a noble one, for man is not made to be a slave to the will of another man; but to what can this revolution tend, undertaken by such a frivolous, pleasure-seeking, excitable nation as the French? Time alone will show.

I had frequent occasion to see the king, sometimes on his way to or from Mass, sometimes in the corridors of one or other of his palaces. He had a fine head, and bore himself with dignity and grace. No painter has ever done justice to this magnificent head, or to its benevolent expression. The king's beauty and grace compelled admiration. When I first saw him I thought he was the very ideal of majesty, and I did not doubt but that Madame de Pompadour was really in love with him; perhaps I was mistaken. His haughtiness was unnatural, it had been instilled in him by education, and now he could not lay it aside. When an ambassador presented any one to him, he made not the slightest sign of recognition, and the person presented would withdraw feeling that it was probable the king had *seen him*, but that was all. He was exceedingly polite to women, even to his mistresses, in public, and would disgrace any one who was wanting in respect towards them. More strongly than any one else, he possessed that royal virtue, dissimulation. He could keep a

secret faithfully, and was delighted when he thought he knew something that no one else knew. The Chevalier d'Eon was an example of this, for the king alone knew, and always had known, that she was a woman: the whole quarrel which the pretended Chevalier had with the Foreign Office was a comedy, which the King encouraged for his own amusement. Louis XV was a good man, and would have been a good king, had he not been surrounded by flatterers; as it was, he grew to consider himself a kind of god, with the saddest results for himself and his people.

I met at the Duchesse de Fulvie's Mlle. Gaussin, who was generally called Lolotte. She was the mistress of Lord Albemarle, the English ambassador, a noble, generous, and learned man. It was he who begged his mistress not to praise the beauty of the stars, as it was impossible for him to give her one. If Lord Albemarle had been ambassador at the time of the rupture between France and England, he would have arranged matters so that the unfortunate war which lost Canada to France would not have taken place.

As for his mistress, Lolotte, there was only one opinion about her, and that was favourable. The first houses in France were open to her. She was received on a footing of equality by the greatest ladies in the land. She had left her mother, at the age of thirteen, to live with Lord Albemarle; she had children by him, whom he recognised as his, and she died Countess d'Erouville.

I met d'Alembert at Madame de Graffigny's. The great philosopher's social secret was never to appear more learned than the society in which he found himself, and of making those he talked with seem as witty as himself. He was the most modest man I ever knew. Old M. de Fontenelle, whom I also knew, passed for having been the lover of Madame de Tencin: scandal said that d'Alembert was the result of their intimacy, and that le Rond was only his foster father. On the occasion of my second visit to Paris, I looked forward to visiting de Fontenelle, but he died fifteen days after my arrival, in the beginning of the year 1757. On my third

visit I was counting on the pleasure of seeing d'Alembert, but he also died fifteen days after my arrival, in 1783. To-day I feel that I have seen Paris and France for the last time. The popular effervescence there has disgusted me, and I am too old to hope to see it calm down.

One morning I was told that the room next to mine had been taken by two young Italians, brother and sister, newly arrived in Paris, very handsome, but badly equipped, and apparently poor. I thought, being a fellow-countryman, I would see if I could be of any use to them, so I went to their door and knocked. A youth of about eighteen appeared in answer to my summons.

'I come,' said I, 'in the quality of neighbour and compatriot to offer you my services.'

There was a mattress on the floor, on which probably the youth slept, and at the end of the room a curtained alcove, in which I imagined his sister to be. A voice from behind the curtain replied to my repeated excuses, that if I would allow her to dress she would return my visit in my room. A quarter of an hour after a very beautiful girl appeared, and made her explanations in a naïve and dignified manner.

'I must find a cheaper lodging,' she said, 'for I have only six francs left.'

I asked her what letters of recommendation she had. She showed me seven or eight certificates of morality and indigence, and a passport.

'Do you know any one in Paris, any influential person?'

'No one. You are the first person I have spoken to in France.'

'Give me your papers, I will see what I can do. In the meantime do me the favour of borrowing these two louis.'

Mlle. Vesian was a brunette, about sixteen years old; she had beautiful eyes, a beautiful figure, a fresh complexion, and withal an air of simplicity and dignity which inspired respect. I thought it my duty to give her some advice, telling her to be on her guard against persons who would assuredly try to insinuate themselves in her good graces. The follow-

ing day, she and her brother dined with me, and after dinner I took her to the Italian theatre. As I was engaged to supper with Silvia, I was forced to leave them after the play, but we arranged to meet at my rooms at eleven o'clock. When I got home, I saw an elegant carriage waiting at the door. I asked who it belonged to. I was told it belonged to a young man of fashion who had supped with Mlle. Vesian.

'She has lost no time,' I thought, and retired, somewhat dispiritedly, to bed.

The next morning the brother came to me and told me that he had been turned out of his sister's room, for the young lord who had supped with her on the night before was paying her a visit.

'Quite so!' I said.

'He is rich and handsome,' he said. 'He wants to take us to Versailles, and he has promised to find me employment.'

Later in the day I received a note from the sister, returning me the money I had lent her, and telling me that the Comte de Narbonne was interested in her, and would see that she and her brother were well provided for.

'A second Lucy de Paséan,' I said to myself. 'I need not have been so careful; and I foresee this count won't make her happy.'

I asked about Narbonne at the theatre where I went, and heard he was a libertine, heavily in debt. I tried to make his acquaintance, but failed, and in a week or so was beginning to forget her, when a message came to me asking me to go to her at once. I found her much cast down; she had evidently been weeping.

'Oh, why did I not rely upon you!' she exclaimed. 'Had I only consulted you I should not now be in this plight! After you left me at the theatre that night, a handsome young man came and sat beside me; he asked me a few questions, and I told him what I told you. I said you had promised to try and help us; he answered that *he* had no need to *try*, he could help us at once. I believed him, I trusted him, and the villain has deceived me. He told me he would take me to

the house of a respectable woman at Versailles, but that it would be better for my brother to remain in Paris. He gave me two louis and a gold watch; I thought I could accept them as he showed so much interest in me, but I noticed that the woman to whose house he took me did not seem to be as respectable as he had given me to understand she was. I spent a week there, without anything being definitely arranged. He came to see me whenever he chose and whenever I suggested a permanent arrangement he replied by saying, "To-morrow, to-morrow." Finally, this morning the woman told me he had gone to the country, and that a *fiacre* would take me back to Paris, where he would see me on his return. She added that I must return her the watch, as the Comte de Narbonne had forgotten to pay for it. I returned it without a word, and making a packet of my belongings, I left the house.'

Narbonne's infamous behaviour made me so angry that, had I known where to find him, I would have gone there and then and punished him. I consoled the poor girl as well as I could, taking care not to ask any details as to what had taken place between them. I could guess that only too well. I promised to be her friend, and she suddenly asked me if I had anything particular to do that day.

'No, my dear,' I said, divining her intention. 'Where is your brother?'

'What does he matter?'

'He matters very much. Think, my dear Vesian! You want to make Narbonne ashamed of his conduct: if he knew that you went off, the very day he dismissed you, with another man he would justify his conduct. No, we will take your brother, and go and dine in the country at the Gros Cailloux. Here comes Baletti, we will take him too.'

After the repast, Baletti asked Mlle. Vesian if she had any talent for dancing, as he might persuade Lani to engage her in the *corps de ballet*. There seemed to be no other occupation open to her, unless she would go as a *femme de chambre* to some great lady.

'It will not be long before I see you covered with diamonds,' he hinted.

'He thinks I shall pick up some great lord,' she said, after he had left. 'May be, but I shall take care to choose the very oldest lord I can find.'

'Bravo, my dear; only take care you don't make the old lord jealous.'

It was decided at once, and the next day she began her lessons with Baletti. She was admitted to the opera, but only remained there a few months. A wealthy man, the Comte de Tressan, or Tréan, became interested in her, and took her away from the theatre. She remained with him until his death, and I hear she is now living in Paris. I often met her, covered with diamonds and driving in a magnificent carriage, and if I have permitted myself to relate her somewhat insignificant history, it was with a view of showing how quickly in those days a pretty girl could turn her beauty to account.

Another young woman whose story is interesting, and edifying at the same time, was Hélène O-Morphi, sister of the Flemish actress of that name. When I first knew her she was an untidy little wretch, about thirteen, who ran errands and waited on her sister, and slept in a cupboard on a straw mattress covered with an old curtain. One day when waiting the return of her sister I amused myself talking to the child, and I then noticed for the first time that beneath the rags and the dirt and the tangled hair was the most beautiful face and body imaginable. She was fair, with perfect features and large blue eyes. I was so impressed with her appearance that I commissioned a German artist of my acquaintance to paint her portrait. The picture was charming; I wrote under it *O-Morphi*, a word not very musical, but none the less Greek, and signifying beautiful. Who can divine the secret ways of fate? I lent this portrait to a friend, who took it to Versailles; there it was seen by M. de Saint-Quintin, who showed it to His Most Christian Majesty. The king was, as every one knows, a connoisseur.

He was so pleased with the portrait that he expressed a desire to compare it with the original. The complaisant Saint-Quintin undertook to arrange the meeting.

A proposition was made to the elder sister, who immediately set to work to wash and dress Hélène. Two or three days later they started for Versailles, where they were received by a valet, who conducted them to a small pavilion in the park. After waiting some time, the king appeared alone and unattended. He asked little O-Morphi if she was Greek, drew the portrait from his pocket, and declared he was more than satisfied with the resemblance.

Hélène, who was watching his face attentively, began to smile. Thereupon Louis seated her on his knee, and asked: 'What are you laughing at, my child?'

'Because you are as like a six-franc piece as two drops of water.'

The naïveté of this remark amused the king, and he asked her if she would care to remain at Versailles.

'If my sister will let me.'

The good sister hastened to express her loyal acquiescence, and by and by Saint-Quintin appeared, and after giving the actress a thousand louis for herself, and fifty for the portrait-painter, took the little one away.

The young O-Morphi pleased the king as much with her simplicity and pretty ways as with her beauty. He placed her in the Parc-aux-Cerfs, where no one but a few privileged court ladies were allowed to enter. At the end of a year Hélène presented him with a son. What became of him I know not; he went the way of so many others; for as long as Queen Marie lived no one knew the fate of the natural children of Louis XV.

Hélène remained in the Parc-aux-Cerfs about three years, when she fell into disgrace owing to the spite of Madame de Valentinois, the sister-in-law of the Prince of Monaco. This lady told her that if she wanted to make the king laugh she must ask him how he treated his old wife. Too simple to see the trap, poor Hélène fell into it, and put this imperti-

nent question to her royal lover, who glared at her angrily, and said, 'Who told you to ask me that?'

Poor O-Morphi flung herself at his feet and told him the whole truth. He left the room, and never saw her again. He gave her a dowry of a hundred thousand francs, and she married a Breton officer. Madame de Valentinois was dismissed from Court, and not allowed to reappear for two years. Louis Quinze knew how deeply he wronged his wife, but he respected her as a queen, and woe to any one who was rude towards her.

About this time the Comte de Melfort, who was colonel of the Orleans regiment, asked me, through his mistress Camille, to answer two questions by means of my cabbalistic combination. I wrote out two very obscure answers, which might be taken to mean anything, sealed them up, and gave them to Camille.

Next day she begged me to accompany her to a place she was forbidden to name. The place turned out to be the Palais Royal. I was conducted up a small staircase to the private apartments of the Duchesse de Chartres. By and by the duchesse herself came in and thanked me most graciously for the answers I had furnished to her questions. She said she had many more things to consult the oracle about. I told her if she would write them down, and leave me alone, in three hours the replies would be ready. She made me pledge my word of honour not to speak of the matter to a living soul, told me to hand the replies only to herself or Madame de Polignac, and then left me. At the appointed time Madame de Polignac came, and I handed her a sealed packet.

The Duchesse de Chartres, daughter of the Prince de Conti, was then twenty-six years old. She was lively and gay, renowned for her wit and love of pleasure. 'A short life and a merry one' were words always on her lips. She was good, generous, patient, and tolerant of the failings of others. She was pretty, but held herself badly, and only laughed when Marcel, the dancing-master, tried to correct her. She danced

with her head hanging down and her toes turned in. She was charming; but unfortunately her face was covered with blotches, the result of a disease of the blood that killed her.

All the questions she had asked me referred to her love affairs, and her complexion, which she was most anxious to cure.

I returned to the Palais Royal next day, and saw the charming princess again. In answering her first question, I had made a shot in the dark. As for the second, I had suffered from much the same indisposition myself, and I was doctor enough to know that one must not attempt to cure a cutaneous malady with strong drugs.

I told her that in a week, if she would follow my instructions, the marks would disappear, and that if she continued the same régime for a year, she would be radically cured.

She was to take medicine every day, diet herself, leave off all cosmetics, and wash her face morning and night with a decoction of plantain leaves.

Eight days later I met her walking in the Palais Royal gardens; her skin was quite smooth and free from blemish. She honoured me with a most gracious smile. But the next day the marks reappeared, and I was sent for in haste. An old *valet de chambre* took me into her boudoir, opening from a dressing-room, in which was a bath. I told her that according to the oracle, she had broken the prescribed rule; and she owned to have taken some ham and some liqueur.

One of her women whispered something into her ear, and she turned to me saying: 'You will perhaps not mind seeing one of my friends here, whose discretion can be relied on?'

A man came in, whom I at first took for a groom. It was the Comte de Melfort. She showed him the answer she had received, and as he appeared sceptical, she declared he must be convinced.

Drawing a small ivory box from her pocket. 'Tell me,' she said, 'why this pomade no longer produces any effect?'

She drew up the chart of figures as I directed, and added and subtracted, obtaining results that were, however, only arbitrarily suggested by me. Then I left her, while she translated the numbers into letters, and when I came in—'Ah, sir, what a prescription!' she cried.

'What is it?'

'*It can only act on the skin of a woman who has never borne a child* was the answer.'

'What!' cried the count, 'is that the pomade the Abbé des Brosses gave you five years ago?'

'Precisely.'

'It is astounding!'

De Melfort and I left the palace together, and in the garden he explained the mystery of the pomade. The poor duchess's face was so disfigured, that her husband neglected her cruelly. She appealed to the Abbé des Brosses, who gave her some ointment which, for the time being, completely cured her. The Duc de Chartres saw her in her box at the theatre, and was so charmed with her smooth white face, that he at once made his peace with her. Nine months after, their child, the Duc de Montpensier, was born. When the count had finished his story, he handed me a tortoise-shell box containing a portrait of the duchess, and a rouleau of a hundred louis, to be spent in framing the miniature to my taste. I never had the portrait mounted, for I always wanted the money for something else!

The duchess often sent for me, but there was no longer any question of a cure, for she had not the patience to follow my régime. I would stay sometimes five or six hours with her, now in one corner of the palace, now in another. She would have dinner and supper served to me by the good old *valet de chambre*, who never opened his lips. I loved her, but I was too proud to let her know it. One day she asked if by means of the cabbala I could cure Madame de Popelinière, who suffered from a cancer in the breast.

I answered at random, that the cancer was imaginary, and that the lady was perfectly well.

'But,' she exclaimed, 'all Paris knows that she consults doctor after doctor. Still I believe what you say.'

She told the Duc de Richelieu that she was sure Madame de Popelinière was quite well. The duke contradicted her, whereupon she offered to bet a hundred thousand francs, but he would not accept the wager.

A few days after, she told me with a triumphant air that M. de Richelieu had owned the pretended cancer was only a *ruse* to excite the pity of M. de la Popelinière, and make him forgive his wife and take her back. The maréchal had added that he would gladly pay the hundred thousand francs if Madame de Chartres would tell him how she had guessed the secret.

'If you care to earn the money,' she said, 'I will tell him.'

I was afraid of being found out, for I knew how clever M. de Richelieu was, and I thought it wiser to forgo the money. Besides, his relations with La Popelinière were no secret. Madame de Chartres had herself composed some charming lampoons on the affair.

My brother François had now painted several fine pictures, and wanted to obtain the patronage of M. de Marigny, so one morning we went to this gentleman's levée at his apartments in the Louvre. Taking with us a large battle-piece, we deposited it in a room near his, and sat down to wait. The first person who passed through the room stopped in front of the picture, looked at it, declared it to be badly painted, and walked on. Soon two more people arrived. They began to laugh, and one of them said, 'That must be the work of a schoolboy.' By and by the room filled with people, who all cut jokes at the expense of the picture. My poor brother said never a word, but I saw he was in agonies. After a while he jumped up, declaring he could bear it no longer, and we returned home, ordering our servant to fetch the picture. When he came back, my brother fell on the unlucky canvas and slashed it to pieces with his sword. He determined to leave Paris at once and

go somewhere where he could study the art he loved. We decided on Dresden, and in mid-August we left Paris together. We passed by Metz, Mayence, and Frankfort, and arrived at Dresden by the end of the month. My mother, who was there, received us with joy, and declared that both of us did her credit.

My life at Dresden was very peaceful. To please my mother I wrote a tragi-comic play, in which were two harlequins. It was a parody on Racine's *Les Frères Ennemis*. The king was highly amused at it, and made me a superb present. He was a magnificently prodigal monarch, and was ably seconded in all his extravagances by the Comte de Brühl. I left Dresden some short time after the success of my piece. My mother, brother, and sister remained behind. The latter was married to Pierre Auguste, harpsichord master to the Court: he died, leaving a widow and numerous family in affluent circumstances, some two years before I began these Memoirs.

CHAPTER XI

MADEMOISELLE C. C.

FROM Dresden I went to Austria, and found myself in Vienna, for the first time in my life. I was short of money, and had but one letter of recommendation, which was to the illustrious Abbé Métastasio. I presented this letter the day after my arrival. The poet struck me as being even more erudite than his works had led me to imagine. He was so modest that at first I almost thought his modesty assumed, but I soon perceived it to be real, for when he recited some of his productions he pointed out their beauties as simply as he pointed out their defects. He repeated some stanzas he had made on the death of his tutor Gravino, which have never been published. When he had finished, his eyes were full of tears, and he said with touching naïveté: 'Tell me truly, is it possible to write better than that?'

I asked him if he wrote with ease, and he showed me five or six pages full of corrections and erasures, containing in all fourteen finished verses. He said he could never do more than that in one day.

Vienna is a beautiful city: in my day, a rich city, and people lived luxuriously, but the bigotry and narrow-mindedness of the empress made life difficult, especially for foreigners. A legion of vile spies, decorated with the high-sounding title of 'Commissioners of Chastity,' overran the place; for the sovereign, who lacked the sublime virtue of tolerance, had taken the register of the seven deadly sins into her own hand, and had decided that six of them could be overlooked, but that the seventh was unforgivable. 'One can,' said she, 'pardon pride, for it is nearly allied to dignity. Avarice is frightful, but closely resembles economy. Anger

re-acts on those who give way to it, thus bringing its own punishment. Gluttony is but daintiness pushed to excess. Envy is a low passion which is never acknowledged. Sloth finds its penalty in *ennui*. But incontinence is a thing apart, a pure heart cannot tolerate it, and I declare open war on it. I know that at Rome much indulgence is shown to this crime, and that every cardinal has his mistress, but at Rome concessions are made to the climate which I have no need to make here, where the bottle and the pipe are the principal pleasures. As soon as I know that a woman is unfaithful to her husband I shall shut her up, whether the husband likes it or not. He should have looked after her better.'

Such was the reasoning of Maria Theresa, and in spite of the high morality which inspired it, it led to many abuses.

If a girl wished to pass unmolested while walking in the street by herself, she must keep her eyes bent down, and carry her rosary in her hand. Then she might possibly be going to church, so that if a commissioner should be so foolish as to arrest her, in that case the commissioner would have been hanged!

The Emperor Francis was handsome, and exceedingly deferential to his wife. The empress, who always called him 'Master,' pretended not to observe his gallantries. She did not want any one to know that her husband was unfaithful to her. Her daughters, with the exception of the eldest, were beautiful; of her sons, I only knew the Crown Prince, and I thought he looked strangely sad.

The Abbé Grosse-tête asked me once what I read in the face of this prince, and I replied, 'Arrogance and suicide.'

I was not far wrong, for Joseph the Second did kill himself, though by accident, and it was his vanity and self-sufficiency which prevented him from realising what he was doing.

My stay in Vienna was unmarked by any exciting incident, and I left the city without regret. A desire to see my country and my old friends had taken hold of me. Four days after leaving Vienna I arrived at Trieste, where I

took ship for Venice. I arrived there two days before the Feast of the Ascension, and after three years' absence had the good luck to find my kind patron, M. de Bragadin, in fair health and spirits, as were also his inseparable friends, Dandolo and Barbaro. They were not less pleased to see me than I was to see them, and to know that after my peregrinations I had returned, sound in body and in pocket.

The circumstances under which I returned this time were singularly felicitous. I had gained experience of men and manners. I was acquainted with the laws of honour and politeness. I felt that I was superior to my surroundings. I was longing to take up again my old life, but I was at the same time determined to behave with greater moderation and reserve.

I was pleased to find, on entering my rooms, that everything had been preserved in *statu quo:* dust an inch thick lay on my papers, and proved that no one had meddled with them.

A few days after my home-coming the annual fête occurred when the Doge espouses the Adriatic, beautiful widow of so many husbands, but as youthful now as on her first bridal morn. M. de Bragadin, who loved above all a quiet life, was accustomed to spend these fête-days at Padua, so as to escape the noise and tumult attendant on them. I accompanied him, and on the Saturday following, having dined with him, and affectionately taken leave of him, I got into a post-chaise to return to Venice. Had I left Padua two minutes earlier or later, much that happened afterwards would have been avoided, and my destiny, if it be true that destiny depends on trivial combinations, would have been different. The reader will see for himself. At Oriago I met a *cabriolet,* the two horses of which were coming along at a quick trot. In the *cabriolet* were seated a very pretty woman, and a man in a German officer's uniform.

A few paces from me, the *cabriolet* turned over; the woman was thrown violently to the ground, and, as they

were on the banks of the Brenta at the moment of the accident, they were in danger of rolling into the river. I jumped out of my chaise and ran to their assistance. She was most profuse in her thanks, and, while her postillion and mine were raising the carriage, called me her saviour and her guardian angel. The damage repaired, they continued their route towards Padua, and I, mine towards Venice.

The next day I started, masked, to follow the *Bucentaur*, which was to be towed to the Lido for the imposing and somewhat ridiculous ceremony. This function, the marriage of the Doge and the sea, takes place at the risk of the Admiral of the Arsenal, who stakes his own head that the weather will be fine. The slightest contrary wind would upset the vessel and drown the Doge, with all the serene signors, the ambassadors, and the papal nuncio; furthermore, this tragic accident would make all Europe laugh and say that for once the Doge of Venice had really consummated his marriage!

I was taking my coffee, my mask drawn aside for the moment, in the Square of San Marco, when a masked woman touched me on the shoulder with her fan. I did not pay much heed to her, but by and by she touched me again. As I was walking along the quay of the Sepulchre I saw the same woman attentively staring at the picture of a monster which was being exhibited for ten sols. I approached her and asked her why she had struck me.

'I punished you,' she said, 'for not recognising me, after having saved my life.'

I guessed that this must be the beauty I had rescued on the banks of the Brenta, and after the usual compliments I asked if she was going to follow the *Bucentaur*.

'I would,' she replied, 'if I had a gondola.'

I offered her mine, which was very large; and after having consulted her companion, who was also masked, she accepted. I begged them to unmask, but they said they had reasons for wishing to remain unrecognised. I asked if they

belonged to any of the foreign embassies, as in that case I should be forced to deprive myself of the pleasure of their company;[1] but they assured me they were both Venetians.

I made love to the lady, but, without precisely repelling me, she hinted that we should first know each other better. I thought her prettier than ever, and offered to be her cavalier all through the carnival if she thought good. After the ceremony I returned with them to their hotel, where we dined together. I invited them to pass the evening with me at the opera.

The next day the officer paid me a visit, and after talking of the rain and the fine weather, I begged him to tell me to whom it was that I had the pleasure of speaking.

This is the story he related to me; (he spoke like an educated man, but I noticed that he did not look me frankly in the face):—

'My name is P. C. My father is rich, and well known on the Bourse, but we have quarrelled. I live on the Quay of St. Mark. The lady whom you saw with me belongs to the family of O.; she is the wife of the well-known broker, C. She has quarrelled with her husband because of me, as I have quarrelled with my father because of her. I wear this uniform because I have a commission in the Austrian service, but at this moment I am engaged in buying cattle for the Venetians. I get the beasts from Hungary and Styria. This enterprise brings me in a profit of ten thousand florins a year; but just at this moment I am in difficulties because of the fraudulent bankruptcy of one of my customers, and because of my extraordinary expenses. I heard a great deal about you four years ago, and I wanted then to make your acquaintance, but I really think it was Heaven that sent you to me yesterday. If you will help me you will run no risk. Will you back these three bills of exchange for me? I will give you three others which will be met before the first ones

[1] It was contrary to Venetian laws for a nobleman to be seen abroad, or in any public place, with the members of foreign embassies, and Casanova, though not noble, was using the gondola, with the servants and liveries, of M. de Bragadin.

fall due. Furthermore, I will arrange that all the cattle landed during the year shall be shipped in your name, so that you can control the sale of them.'

I did not hesitate to tell him that I could not entertain the idea for a single moment. He tried to persuade me, but seeing that I was immovable he left me, saying he hoped we should meet again soon.

Had I been wise I should have dropped his acquaintance, for he was trying to dupe me; but considering that a mere visit of ceremony could not compromise me, I went to see him the following evening.

He tried once more to induce me to back the three bills, and I was about to take my leave disgusted, when he begged to be allowed to present me to his mother and sister.

The mother was an ingenuous and respectable-looking person, but the daughter was a perfect beauty. I was dazzled, and in half an hour completely captivated; her candour, her ingenuousness, her noble sentiments, her vivacity, all helped to make me her slave, for the union of beauty, intelligence, and innocence has always swayed me.

Mademoiselle C. C. never went out without her mother. She only read the books her father chose for her, and among them were no romances. She knew nothing of Venetian society, for they received no one at their house. She questioned me closely about the places I had been to, and the people I had met. It was a pleasure to me to answer, but I paid her no compliments. I did not tell her she was beautiful, or that she interested me, for I had lied so often on these points to others that I wished to treat her differently.

I left the house in a sad and thoughtful mood, almost prepared not to enter it again; for I knew, alas! that I was not made for the chains of matrimony, though I knew that she would make me as happy as any wife could possibly do. I met her brother a few days after, and he told me that his sister did nothing but talk about me, that she seemed to remember every word I had said, and that his mother was delighted to have made my acquaintance.

'She would be a good match for you,' he said, 'for she has a dowry of ten thousand ducats. Come and see me to-morrow, and we will take coffee with her and my mother.'

The scoundrel did not say any more about his bills of exchange; but seeing that I had abandoned the pursuit of his mistress in favour of his sister, he conceived the brilliant idea of selling her to me. I was sorry for the mother and sister of this ignominious creature, but I had not sufficient virtue to renounce my share of the proposed bargain. I even tried to persuade myself that, as I loved her, I ought to prevent her from falling into worse hands. We induced the too confident mother to allow her to go with us to the opera, P. C.'s mistress making a fourth. The next day P. C. told me with an air of triumph that his sister had told his mother that she would rather marry me than any man in the world, and that she was sure I cared for her.

'I adore her,' I answered; 'but do you think that your father would give her to me?'

'No, I do not think so, but he is very old, and in the meantime—make you hay while the sun shines! My mother says she may go to the opera with us again. But I want you to do me a service. I have an opportunity of buying some excellent Cyprus wine, which I could sell again at a large profit; the merchant will not take a bill with my name only, will you add yours?'

I signed the note this time, without discussion. Where is the man who would not have done the same?

I was seriously in love, and thanks to the good offices of the brother, who made us the excuse for his own amours, it was possible to see the object of my affections often. I took her in my gondola, and having dropped the brother and his friend, and thrown aside our masks, we spent hours in the gardens of the Zuecca at St. Blaise, where we ran races together, the prize being a pair of garters which I had bought for her, and for which she gave me hers in exchange. I remember she outran me, and I had to simulate a fall to make her stop and come to my rescue. She was only fifteen,

and absolutely innocent. I was determined to make her mine legally and for life, but when I spoke to her mother the good lady said we must be reasonable and wait; that as my charming C. C. was only fourteen years old, it was useless to ask her father's consent.

The dreadful thing was that, as carnival time was nearly over, we should no longer have an excuse for going about masked; and I had got into the habit of taking C. C., whom I now regarded as my wife in all but name, to a little casino in the country, and spending long hours with her. That would, of course, be in future impossible.

I decided to take M. de Bragadin into my confidence, and in an interview I had with him and his two friends, I laid the matter before them, keeping to myself certain details which it was unnecessary they should know, but insisting that my love for C. C. was so great that I was determined to elope with her, if her father withheld his consent to our union.

'I must,' said I, 'obtain some employment or position which will assure me an income equivalent, at least, to her fortune.'

The worthy gentlemen replied, that if *Paralis* would instruct them what to do they would gladly obey. This, of course, was just what I wanted, and the next two hours were spent in making pyramids and combinations which produced favourable answers to all their inquiries. It was decided that M. de Bragadin should be the one charged to ask the hand of the young lady, as it was he who undertook to place me in a satisfactory position.

I went to tell C. C. the result of my interview with my friends, and found her and her mother in tears. The brother had been imprisoned for debt that very morning, and they had every reason to fear that the sums he owed were considerable. He had left a letter for me, begging me to go to his assistance. It was not in my power to be of use to him; all I could do was to give his mother twenty-five sequins for his immediate needs.

The circumstance of his imprisonment somewhat depressed our spirits, and I could not help feeling uneasy when C. C. told me that her father was expected home from the country that night. When I was bidding her farewell she slipped a note into my hand, in which she gave me instructions to re-enter the house that night, by means of a key contained in her letter. I should find her, she said, in her brother's room. As the reader may imagine, I was exact at the rendezvous. I entered the house without difficulty, and found my angel awaiting me.

'My father has arrived in perfect health,' she said, 'but he treats me like a child, though I fear that he will soon see I am no longer a child. God knows what he will do if he discovers I have a lover!'

'What can he do? If he refuses me your hand, I will run away with you, and the patriarch will not withhold from us the nuptial benediction. We shall belong to each other for ever.'

'It is what I desire more than anything in the world. But, O my dear friend, you do not know my father!'

The next day this terrible parent had a long interview with M. de Bragadin, the result of which was worse even than the mother had predicted it would be, for he declared, that as his daughter had still four years to wait before he would allow her to marry, he had decided she should pass those four years in a convent; he added, by way of softening his refusal, that if by that time I had a good position, and we were both of us still in the same mind, he would consent to our union.

That night the little key was useless, for the door was bolted on the inside. I passed twenty-four hours in the cruellest perplexity, not knowing what to do for the best; as the brother was in prison, it was very difficult for me to hold any communication with C. C.

A prey as I was to desperate and sombre thoughts, I paid a visit to her mother. I was met at the door by a servant, who told me the family had gone into the country, she did

not know where, and she did not know when they would be back. I then went to see P. C. in prison, but met with no better results. He knew nothing, and he told me a tissue of lies, in return for which I gave him two sequins.

Misfortunes never come singly, and I now began to lose heavily at cards. I sold everything I possessed of any value, and got deeply into debt. I was too much ashamed of myself to appeal to my old friends for help, and it seemed as though there was nothing left for me but to kill myself. I was meditating suicide one day, while shaving, when my servant told me a young Milanese, named Antonio Croce, of whom I shall often have occasion to speak, had come to see me. He had a plan, he said, by which both he and I could line our pockets. If I would go halves with him, he would start a faro bank at his house. There were seven or eight rich foreigners, who were all in love with his wife, and who would lose their money light-heartedly to win her favour. We must each of us, he said, put three hundred sequins in the bank to start with. I knew very well that Croce's proposition was not of the highest morality, and at any other time I should have sent him about his business, but I was at the end of my resources, and did not want to importune M. de Bragadin; besides, if I had refused, Madame Croce's admirers would have been victimised all the same, and some one else would have profited by their misfortunes.

I went with Croce to the Prato della Valle, where we found the signora surrounded by her court of foreigners. She was very pretty, but as a secretary of Count de Rosemberg, the imperial minister to Venice, was attached to her suite, no Venetian nobleman dared show himself in her society. I noticed among others an enormously wealthy Swede named Gilenspetz, a Hamburger, and an English Jew named Mendex.

Where were we to find the three hundred sequins needed to start the bank? I was obliged to have recourse to M. de Bragadin after all, but the good and generous old man as usual had not a sol in his pocket. He found a money-lender,

however, who was willing to advance the sum on his signature, at five per cent. per month, the interest of one month deducted from the total.

The first night we played, Croce and I won sixteen hundred sequins between us, the next night Gilenspetz alone lost two thousand sequins, and the Jew Mendex lost a thousand. Sunday was a day of rest, but Monday the bank won four thousand sequins. On Tuesday, we all dined together, and were just beginning to play, when a commissioner of police came in, and told Croce he wished to say two words to him alone. They went out together, and when Croce returned he said, looking a little uncomfortable, that he had received orders not to allow any more gambling in his house. Madame fainted, the punters went off, and I, after taking half the gold which was on the table, followed their example.

Croce's principal crime in the eyes of the police, was that he had kept the novices and mere amateurs of play to himself, and so prevented them from losing their money at the *foyer* of the opera, where the bankers were generally Venetian noblemen.

CHAPTER XII

A VENETIAN PRISON

About this time, fate threw in my way a patrician named Mark Anthony Zorzi, a man of some talent, celebrated for his witty couplets; he was devoted to the drama, and produced a comedy which the public dared to hiss. The piece was condemned for its want of merit, but he was convinced that its failure was due to the influence of the Abbé Chiari, the titular poet of the Theatre Saint Angelo. From that moment Zorzi looked on the abbé as his enemy, and vowed vengeance against him. He hired a set of ruffians, who attended the theatre nightly, to hiss, without rhyme or reason, every one of the unfortunate Chiari's comedies. I did not care for Chiari, either as man or author, and Zorzi's house was an agreeable one to frequent; he had an excellent cook and a charming wife. I repaid his hospitality by criticising his enemy's productions.

The reader may remember my satires on the Abbé Chiari. He answered them in a pamphlet in which I was somewhat roughly handled. I replied to this pamphlet, and threatened the abbé with the bastinado if he were not more careful in his way of speaking in future. He took no public notice of this threat, but I received an anonymous letter bidding me mind myself and leave the abbé alone. About this same time a man named Manuzzi (whom I afterwards found out to be a vile spy in the pay of the inquisitors) offered to get me some diamonds on credit, and on this pretended business obtained admission to my rooms. While there he began to turn over my books and manuscripts, showing special interest in those which dealt with magic. Like a fool I showed him some books dealing with elementary spirits. My readers will

do me the justice to believe that I was not the dupe of this nonsense. I merely amused myself with it, as one may amuse oneself with a clever toy. A few days later the traitor told me that a certain person, whose name he was not at liberty to mention, would give me a thousand sequins for five of my books, provided he was convinced of their authenticity. I confided them to him, and in twenty-four hours he brought them back, saying that the would-be purchaser feared they were forgeries. Some years afterwards I learnt that he had taken them to the Secretary of the State Inquisitors, and the fact of my having such books in my possession was sufficient to convince this official that I was a magician.

Everything went against me in this fatal month. A certain Madame Memno took it into her head that I was teaching her son the precepts of atheism. She appealed to the uncle of M. de Bragadin to check me in my nefarious career, and naturally the old man was only too glad of an excuse to attack me, for like all de Bragadin's family he was jealous of me. He declared I had obtained an undue influence over his nephew by means of my *cabbala*.

Things were growing serious; an *auto-da-fé* might even have become possible, for the things I was accused of concerned the Holy Office, and the Holy Office is a ferocious beast with whom it is dangerous to meddle. There were certain circumstances connected with me, however, which made it difficult for them to shut me up in the ecclesiastical prisons of the Inquisition, and because of this it was finally decided that the State Inquisitors should deal with me. I learnt afterwards that a paid denunciator, supported by two witnesses, had been found to solemnly declare that I did not believe in God, and worshipped the devil. As a proof of this it was alleged that when I lost at play I was never heard to curse Satan! I was also accused of not observing Fridays and other days of abstinence. I was suspected of being a Freemason, and was known to be intimate with foreign ministers who doubtless, said my traducers, paid me large sums of money for information I obtained from my patrician friends. This

was a long and serious list of charges against me. It was obvious that I was looked on with disfavour by many influential personages, and several of my real friends, who were truly interested in me, advised me to travel for a time, but I was too obstinate to listen to their counsels. I knew I was innocent, and therefore I thought I had no cause for fear, besides which the actual troubles and anxieties with which I was beset prevented me from attending to what I considered imaginary difficulties. I was heavily in debt, and had pawned all my valuables. Fortunately I had confided my miniatures, papers, and letters to my old friend, Madame Manzoni. How necessary this precaution was my readers will soon see. On returning from the theatre one night I found my door had been forced; the Grand Inquisitor himself, my landlady told me, accompanied by a body of police, had paid me a domiciliary visit, and had turned over everything in my apartment. They told the woman they were looking for a large case of salt, which was an article of contraband; of course they did not find the pretended object of their search, and after a thorough investigation of my belongings, retired, seemingly empty-handed.

'The case of salt,' said my old friend, de Bragadin, 'is nothing but a pretext. I was a state inquisitor for several months, and I know something of their ways. They do not break open doors in search of contraband goods. Believe me, when I tell you, you must leave Venice at once. Go to Fusina, and from thence to Florence, and do not return till I tell you you can do so without risk.'

Blind and presumptuous as I was, I would not listen to his advice. He then, and as a last resource, begged me to take up my abode in the palace with him, for a patrician's palace is sacred, and the archers of the police do not dare to cross the threshold without a special order from the tribunal. Such an order is rarely or never given.

I am ashamed to say I refused even this request from the dear and worthy old man to whom I owed so much love and gratitude; had I listened to him I should have saved myself

much misery, and him much grief. Long and earnestly he urged me to take some precautions for my safety, but in vain. I was moved when I saw him actually weeping; but as I did not want to yield, I begged him to spare me the sight of his tears. With a strong effort he controlled himself, made a few casual remarks, and then with a kind, affectionate smile embraced me, saying, 'Perhaps this is the last time we shall see each other, but *Fata viam invenient.*'

I returned his embrace and left him; his prediction was fulfilled. I never saw him again; he died eleven years later.

I was not in the least concerned about my safety, but I was troubled about my debts. On leaving the Bragadin Palace that last time I went to see one of my principal creditors, to persuade him to grant me a delay of eight days before forcing me to pay what I owed him. After a painful interview with this man I went home to bed.

The next morning, before it was light, the door of my room was flung open, and the terrible Grand Inquisitor entered.

'Are you Jacques Casanova?' he asked.

He then commanded me to rise and dress myself, and to give him all the papers and documents in my possession, whether written by myself or by others.

'In virtue of whose order?' I asked.

'The order of the State Tribunal,' he replied, and I knew there was nothing for me to do but to obey.

Who can explain the influence which certain words exercise over us? Strong in my courage and my innocence, I was yet positively petrified by the word 'tribunal,' and could only passively obey.

'Take them,' said I, pointing to the papers which covered my writing-table. Messer Grande stuffed them into a sack, and then told me I must give up the bound manuscripts I possessed. I showed him where they were hidden, and I knew now that it was Manuzzi who had betrayed me, for these were the books he had offered to buy—the *Clavicula of Solomon*, the *Zecor-ben*, a *Picatris*, a full *Essay on the*

Planetary Hours, and the conjurations necessary for holding colloquies with demons of all descriptions. Those who knew I had these books thought that I was a great magician, a supposition which had somewhat flattered me.

Messer Grande also took the books I had on my table, *Petrarch*, *Ariosto*, *Horace*, the *Military Philosopher*, the *Portier des Chartreux* and *Aretino*.

While these things were being gathered up, I dressed myself mechanically, shaved, put on a laced shirt, and my best clothes. Messer Grande watched me imperturbably, dressing as if for a wedding. There were about forty archers outside the door, which showed they expected some difficulty in arresting me! Two would have been enough. It is odd that in London, where every one is brave, one can arrest another single-handed. Among cowards thirty are not considered too many: it is, perhaps, because the coward turned assailant is more frightened than the coward whom he assails! Anyhow in Venice I have often seen a single man stand up against twenty policemen, and escape from them in the end; and I remember once in Paris helping a friend to get away from forty vile myrmidons of the law!

I was taken to the Grand Inquisitor's house, and locked up in a room there. I was quite incapable of thinking or making any plans for my defence, and I spent four hours dozing on a sofa, waking up every now and then, only to fall asleep again, as though under the influence of some powerful narcotic. About three o'clock the captain of the archers came in and told me he had orders to conduct me to 'The Leads.' [1] In silence I followed him; we took a gon-

[1] The prison took its name from the fact that the roof was covered with sheets of lead instead of tiles. The garrets of the palace were divided into cells which formed the prison, and were entered by a narrow staircase from the Salle Bussola. In the space between the last room and the roof were a dozen cells, where state prisoners were confined, but at the present day the partitions are down to make a depôt for paper, and the prison is suppressed. It was by the last window on the side of the Bridge of Sighs that Casanova escaped. Victor Hugo describes 'the Leads' in *Angelo, Tyrant of Padua*.

dola, and after many twistings and turnings, entered the Grand Canal, and landed at the prison quay. After going up and down several staircases, we crossed an enclosed bridge, connecting the ducal palace with the prison, and spanning a narrow canal, which is called the 'rio di Palazzo.' We crossed a long gallery, and entered a room in which sat an individual in patrician dress, who, after looking me up and down, said, 'Put him in safe keeping.' This man was the secretary of the inquisitors, Domenico Cavalli. He was evidently ashamed to speak Venetian before me, for he ordered my detention in the Tuscan *patois*. I was handed over to the guardian of the prison, who held an enormous bunch of keys. I followed him up two little flights of stairs and down a gallery, ending in a locked door. Beyond this door was another gallery, and another door opening on to a long dirty garret, ill lighted by a window in the roof. At first I thought this garret was my destination, but I was mistaken, for, taking up a huge key, the gaoler opened a heavy door, barred with iron, and only about three feet and a half high, with a small round hole in the middle; he made a sign to me to pass through, but at that moment I was busily staring at an iron machine solidly clamped to the wall, in the shape of a horse-shoe, and about fifteen inches in diameter.

'I see, sir,' said the gaoler smiling, 'that you want to know the use of that little instrument. When their Excellencies order some one to be strangled, he is seated on a stool, his back against the wall, that collar round his neck; a silken cord goes through the holes at the two ends, and passes over a wheel; the executioner turns a crank, and the condemned man yields up his soul to God! So we have every reason to believe, for, thank Heaven, the confessor does not leave him till he is dead.'

'Most ingenious,' said I, 'and I think it must be you who have the honour of turning the crank.' He did not answer, but made me another sign, in reply to which I passed through the door; I had to bend myself double to do so. He locked

me in, and then asked me through the grated hole what I would like to eat. I answered that I had not thought about eating so far, whereupon he left me, and I heard him carefully fasten the doors behind them.

There was a window in the cell, about two feet wide, crossed by iron bars, the thickness of a man's thumb. This formed sixteen panes, five inches square. This window would have let in plenty of light had it not been half blocked by an immense oaken roof beam. I could not stand upright, as the walls were only five feet and a half high; on one side was a kind of alcove, capable of holding a bed, but there was no bed, or table, or chair, or furniture of any kind, except a small tub, and a narrow bench screwed to the wall, four feet above the floor. On this bench I laid my paduasoy mantle, my beautiful new coat, and my hat, trimmed with a long white feather and Spanish point lace. It was terribly hot. I went to the hole in the door to get some air, and saw several enormous rats running about freely in the outer garret. These animals have always been abhorrent to me, and make my blood run cold. I hastily shut up the hole with a wooden shutter which hung on the inside.

I passed eight hours, leaning my arms on the window ledge, silent and motionless. The sound of a clock striking roused me; it was strange that no one came near me. I was not hungry, but I was thirsty, and had a bitter taste in my mouth. After another interval of three hours I grew furious. I shouted and yelled, and kicked against the walls and doors; but all to no purpose. After an hour of this exercise I shut the grating, lest the rats should get in, and lay full length on the floor. I was now convinced that the barbarous inquisitors had abandoned me to die of starvation. Yet I failed to see how I had merited such treatment. I was a libertine, a gambler, outspoken, and too fond, perhaps, of the less innocent pleasures of life, but I had committed no crime against the state. Varying my meditations with curses and imprecations, worn out with fatigue, tortured with hunger and thirst, God was good to me—I fell asleep.

It was pitch dark when I awoke. I was lying on my left side on the hard narrow plank. I stretched out my right hand to find my handkerchief, which I had by me, when to my horror it encountered another hand, stiff and cold as ice. I have never in my life been so frightened, and it was several minutes before I recovered my senses sufficiently to perceive that it was my own left hand I was grasping; it had become insensible through the hardness of the boards, and the weight of my body. This incident, trivial in itself, made me think. I saw I was in a position which distorted and exaggerated everything, so that what was true appeared false, and what was false appeared true. I determined to be on my guard against the chimeras my heated imagination was certain to conjure up; for the first time in my life, at the age of thirty, I called to my aid the philosophy whose germs had always been dormant in me. Many men die without ever having really reflected in their lives, and this not because they are lacking in intelligence, but because circumstances of a sufficiently extraordinary nature have never arisen to shake them out of their routine.

At last the day began to break, after what seemed an interminable night, and I heard the sound of bolts being withdrawn. The harsh voice of the gaoler came through the door, 'Well, have you had time to think of what you would like to eat?'

I replied civilly that I should like some rice soup, boiled beef, a roast of some kind, some bread, wine, and water. I saw that he was astonished at my not complaining, and he asked if I did not wish for a bed and some furniture? 'For,' said he, 'if you think you are only here for one day you are mistaken.'

'Bring me what you think is necessary.'

'Where am I to go for these things? Here is a pencil and paper, write down what you want.'

I made a list of the things I required, clothes, furniture, and the books the inquisitors had taken out of my room.

'Not so fast, not so fast,' said the brute; 'cross off books,

paper, pens, looking-glass, and razors—all those are forbidden fruit here; and give me some money to pay for your dinner.'

I had three sequins in my pocket, and I gave him one, and he went off to serve, as I afterwards learned, the seven other prisoners who were confined in the cells under the leads. He reappeared at noon, with the furniture and food. I was given an ivory spoon to eat with, knives and forks were forbidden.

'You must order what you want for to-morrow,' he said, 'for I can only come to you once a day. The secretary says he will send you some instructive books to read; those you asked for are not edifying.'

'Tell him I wish to thank him for having given me a cell to myself.'

'You do not know what you are saying. You have been put by yourself as a punishment, you will soon long for company.'

He was right; a man shut up alone in a dismal place where he can only see the person who brings him his food for a few minutes once a day becomes wretched. I began to crave for human society, and would have welcomed an assassin or a leper. Solitude in a prison cell means despair; one must know it from actual experience, and I would not wish my worst enemy such a fate. If a man of letters is supplied with paper and ink, his misfortunes are lessened by nine-tenths, but my persecutors did not want to make things pleasant to me.

I set my table and sat down to dinner, but though I had been fasting for forty-eight hours, I could only swallow a few spoonfuls of soup. I passed the day in my armchair, but when night came it was impossible for me to close my eyes, for three reasons: firstly, the rats; secondly, the terrible din made by the clock of Saint Mark's, which sounded as if it were in my room; and thirdly, the thousands of fleas which invaded my body, bit and stung me, poisoning my blood to such an extent that I suffered from spasmodic con-

tractions amounting to convulsions. When Laurence, the gaoler, came to make my bed and sweep out my cell, he brought me two big volumes, which I carefully abstained from opening, as I knew that the sight of their titles would cause me a movement of indignation, which it would be impossible for me to suppress, and the spy would carefully describe it to the inquisitors. One of the books was called *The Mystical City*, by Sister Mary of Jesus of Agrada. The other was *The Adoration of the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ*, by the Jesuit, Father Caravita. This second one did not appeal to me particularly, but *The Mystical City* looked interesting.

The book was published with the permission of the Holy and Horrible Inquisition, and this was, to my mind, the most astonishing thing of all about it, for, so far from exciting zeal or fervour for religion in one's mind, it seemed to me only calculated to make one treat Christian mysteries and Christian dogma as fabulous.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ESCAPE FROM THE LEADS

LAURENCE, who was a great gossip, could not understand how it was I never questioned him. He wanted to plume himself on his brilliant faculty of discretion. He began to account for my attitude by supposing that I did not consider his information worth having, and this piqued his *amour-propre*.

On New Year's Day 1756, he came in with a large packet for me: it contained a dressing-gown, lined with fox-skin, a quilted silk counterpane, and a large bear-skin bag to put my legs in. Imagine my joy at receiving these presents, the more welcome as the cold was now intense; furthermore, I was told I was to receive six sequins a month, with which I could buy what books I liked, and might subscribe to the *Gazette*. All this came from my dear old friend and father, M. de Bragadin; Laurence told me he had gone down on his knees to the inquisitors, and begged them with tears to allow him to send me these proofs of his constant affection.

One must have been in a position like mine to feel what I felt at that moment. I wrote in pencil on a scrap of paper—

'I thank the generosity of the tribunal, and the untiring goodness of M. de Bragadin.'

One fine day when I was permitted to walk for a little while in the garret my eyes fell on a bolt, and I saw in a flash how I could make an offensive and defensive weapon of it.

I carried it away under my dressing-gown, and worked

at it for eight days, rubbing it on a bit of marble until I had sharpened it up to a point. I made eight long pyramidal facets, and produced an octagonal dagger, as well proportioned as if it had been turned out by an armourer. It was not achieved without much trouble and fatigue. I had no oil, and had to spit on the stone to moisten it; my right arm became so stiff it was impossible for me to move it, and the palm of my hand was an open wound, but when I looked at my shining weapon I forgot my pains. I was delighted with this tool, though I had as yet no idea how to use it, but the first thing was to hide it from prying eyes. I found a safe place for it in the stuffing of the back of my armchair, and, as I afterwards found, this was the best place I could have chosen.

I own that I am proud of my evasion; not of my success, for good luck had a large share in that, but of my courage and strength of mind in conceiving such a project, in spite of all I had against me.

I was certain that under my cell was the room in which I had seen Cavalli, the secretary. This room was cleaned every morning. The thing to do was to make a hole through the ceiling, let myself down with the sheets of my bed, and hide under the table till the door was opened. If there should be an archer outside, I must trust to Providence and my weapon to get rid of him. The difficulty was to keep Laurence and his men from sweeping under my bed, more especially as I had particularly asked them to do so, on account of the fleas.

I pretended I had a violent cold, and that the dust made me cough. For a few days this worked all right, and then Laurence grew suspicious, came in with a candle, and every corner was swept out. The next morning I pricked my finger, and showing the blood-stained handkerchief to the gaoler, 'You see,' I said, 'what the dust did; I coughed so violently I must have broken a small blood-vessel.'

The doctor was sent for, and when I told him the cause of my illness, he said I was perfectly right, nothing was so

bad for the lungs as dust: he told us a young man had just died from the same thing; and, in fact, if I had bribed him, he could not have served me better.

I was too profitable a person for Laurence not to wish to take care of me, and the archers were ordered not to disturb me any more by sweeping, and Laurence was profuse in his apologies, assuring me he had only kept my room clean to please me.

The winter nights were very long. I had to pass nineteen mortal hours in the dark. A miserable kitchen-lamp would have made me so happy, but how was I to get it? Truly 'Necessity is the mother of Invention.' I had a small earthen pot, in which I cooked eggs: this filled with salad oil, with a wick made of cotton frayed out of my counterpane, would do for a lamp, but how was I to light it? I asked Laurence to get me some pumice-stone for the toothache from which I pretended to be suffering, and as he did not seem to know what pumice-stone was, I added, as negligently as I could, that a flint would do just as well, if I soaked it in vinegar. The credulous fool gave me half a dozen. I had a large steel buckle on the waistband of my under-drawers, so was now the proud possessor of flint and steel; yet I had to have recourse again to the doctor, and on pretence of a skin eruption got some flowers of sulphur; under the sleeves of my beautiful coat, between the silk and the lining, the tailor had sewn pieces of *amadou:* flint, steel, matches, tinder, I had them all.

The flooring was made of larch-wood; after working for six hours I had scraped off a towelful of chips; these I put to one side, intending to empty them behind the cases in the garret. The first plank was four inches thick; when I got through it, I found another of the same size. In three weeks I had made a hole in the three planks of which the flooring was composed, and then I despaired, for below the planks was a layer of bits of marble, forming what is called in Venice a *terrazo marmorino*. This is the ordinary paving of all Venetian houses except the very poorest; the nobles

themselves prefer the *terrazo* to the most beautiful *parquet*.

Of course my bolt made no impression on this cement, and I was almost discouraged when I remembered the story of how Hannibal made a passage through the Alps, after softening the rocks with vinegar. I poured all the vinegar I had into the hole, and the next day, whether it was that it had really had some effect, or whether it was that I was stronger for rest, I managed to crumble away the mortar which held the mosaic together. Under the marble was another plank, which I guessed must be the last.

How I prayed while I worked: strong minds may say that prayer is no good, they do not know what they are talking about! I know from experience how efficacious prayer is, for if help does not come directly from God, it comes from the confidence we feel in Him.

By the twenty-third of August my labour was ended, the hole was sufficiently wide and long for me to squeeze through. There was only now the plaster of the ceiling to remove. I could see through a tiny hole into the secretary's room. I fixed the date of my evasion for the vigil of the feast of Saint Augustine, for I knew that on that day there was an assembly of the Grand Council in another part of the building. This vigil fell on the twenty-seventh.

On the twenty-fifth, a misfortune befell me which, when I think of it now, makes me shiver, in spite of the many years which have gone by since then.

At noon precisely I heard the bolts drawn back. I flung myself into my armchair. Laurence came in, crying: 'I bring you good news, sir. I bring you good news.'

For a moment I thought it was my pardon, and I trembled lest the discovery of the hole should revoke it.

'Follow me,' said the gaoler.

'Wait till I am dressed.'

'No, come as you are. You are only going to step out of this villainous cell into another one, which is clean and has been newly done up, where there are two big windows from

which you can see half Venice, and where you can stand upright.'

I nearly swooned. 'Give me some vinegar,' said I, 'and go and tell the secretary and the tribunal that I thank them for their kindness, but I beg them to let me stay here. I am used to this place now. I would rather not change.'

'Are you mad, sir?' said Laurence with the most irritating good nature. 'You do not know what is good for you. You are going to be taken from hell to be put in paradise, and you refuse? Come, come, you must obey. Get up. I will give you my arm, and your books and traps shall be brought after us.'

It was useless to rebel. More dead than alive, I tottered out, leaning on his arm. We went down two narrow corridors, up three steps, across a hall and then through another corridor, only about two feet wide, at the end of which was the door of my new abode. It had a grated window in it, looking on to the corridor, and in this latter were two windows, also grated, which commanded a fine view as far as the Lido; but nothing pleased me then, though afterwards this window was a veritable boon to me, for through it there came a soft fresh breeze, such as I had been long stranger to. My one gleam of consolation was when the archers brought in the armchair in which my tool was hidden. They brought in my bed, and then went to fetch the remainder of my things, but they did not come back.

For two mortal hours I sat in an agony of suspense. The door of my cell remained open, and there was something strangely ominous and unnatural about this. Besides 'The Leads' and '*Les Quatres*' there are nineteen subterranean prisons in the same ducal palace, frightful cells, destined for unhappy creatures who are not condemned to death, though may be their crimes have merited capital punishment.

While I was waiting the return of the archers, I saw myself, in imagination, hurled into one of these horrible holes. By and by I heard hurried steps, and Laurence came

in, pale with anger, foaming at the mouth, and blaspheming God and the saints. He ordered me to give him the hatchet and the tools I had used for piercing the floor, and at the same time to tell him the name of the archer who had furnished me with them. I replied that I did not know what he was talking about. When he ordered his men to search me, I jumped up, and stripping myself naked, 'Do you duty,' I said, 'but don't one of you dare to touch me.'

They hunted through my mattress and pillows, and the cushions of the armchair, but never thought of looking among the springs in its back.

'You won't say where the instruments are with which you have made the hole in the floor, but we know how to make you speak,' said Laurence.

'If it be true that I have made a hole in the floor, and I am questioned about it, I shall say that it was you yourself who gave me the tools, and that I have returned them to you.'

This answer and my determined tone somewhat took him aback. He continued to curse and tear his hair, and as an immediate punishment for me shut the windows of the corridor, so that I was stifled for want of air.

At break of day he brought me some horrible wine and some water, so dirty it was impossible to drink it. Everything was equally bad, the meat stank and the bread was hard. He did not listen when I complained, but busied himself sounding the walls and floor with an iron bar. I watched him with a seemingly indifferent air, but did not fail to notice that he did not strike the ceiling. 'It is through there,' thought I, 'that I shall pass out of this hell.'

I spent a cruel day. An exhausting sweat, and hunger brought on by want of food, made me so weak, I could scarcely stand. I could not even bear to read. The next day the wretch brought me such putrid veal for my dinner that the smell alone made me sick.

'Have you received orders,' said I, 'to kill me with hunger and heat?'

He did not answer me, but went out locking the door noisily behind him. I asked for pencil and paper that I might write to the secretary. No notice was taken of my request. This cruel treatment on the part of my gaoler and his ingenious methods of torturing me so wrought on my naturally violent temper that I determined to kill him. On the eighth day of semi-starvation I made up my mind to plunge my pike into his belly. But I slept well that night, which calmed me, and I contented myself with telling him I would have him assassinated as soon as I was free. He only laughed. At last I hit on the means of making him speak. In the presence of the archers, I ordered him in a voice of thunder, to bring me my accounts, and to tell me exactly every penny he had spent of my money. This disconcerted him, and he told me in an uneasy voice that he would bring me the settlement next day. He appeared in the morning with a large basket of lemons M. de Bragadin had sent me, a fine roast fowl, and a big bottle of water. He gave me his account. On glancing down it I saw there were four sequins to my credit; I told him to give three to his wife, and divide the remaining one among the archers. This small act of generosity won their affection.

'You say, sir,' said Laurence, 'that it was I who gave you the tools used in making that enormous hole. I suppose I must believe you, though I don't understand it. But would you mind letting me know who gave you the materials for your lamp?'

'You did. You gave me oil, flint, matches, the rest I had.'

'Merciful Lord! and did I give you a hatchet?'

'I will tell you everything, and I will tell you the truth, but only in the presence of the secretary of the Inquisition.'

'For God's sake, then, hold your tongue. I should lose my place, and I am a poor man with children.'

He went off, holding his head in his hands, and I congratulated myself on having found means to frighten him. He would hold his tongue for his own sake.

One day I ordered him to buy me the works of Maffei.

He hated laying out money for books, and he said, 'If you have read all those you have I can borrow some from another prisoner, which would be an economy.'

'Novels, probably, which I hate.'

'No; scientific books. If you think you are the only intellectual person here you are mistaken.'

'Well, take this from me to the other intellectual person, and ask him to lend me one in exchange.'

I gave him the *Rationarium* of Petau, and in five minutes he returned with the first volume of Wolff.

I thought I might possibly enter into a correspondence with my fellow-prisoner, and was delighted to find these words written on the margin of one of the pages—

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius.

The reader will remember that I was not allowed pencil or ink, but I had made a very good pen out of the nail of my right hand little finger, which I wore very long, and the juice of mulberries made capital ink. I wrote six Latin verses, and a list of the books I possessed, on a piece of paper, and slipped it under the binding [1] of the borrowed book; above the title I wrote *Latet.*

When the second volume was brought me next day I found a loose sheet of paper, on which was written in Latin—

'There are two of us in the same prison, and we are delighted at the prospect of corresponding with you. My name is Marin Balbi; I am a Venetian nobleman and a monk, and my companion is Count Andréa Asquini of Udine. He wishes me to tell you that his books, of which you will find a note on the back of this volume, are at your service, but we warn you that we must be very careful not to let Laurence know of our intercourse.'

It was all very well to warn me to be careful, but rather ridiculous to do so on a loose sheet of paper, which Laurence

[1] Italian books of that period were mostly bound in parchment, turned over and stitched, thus forming a pocket on each cover.

might easily have found. This incident did not give me a very high idea of my correspondent's sagacity.

I wrote to Balbi telling him who I was, how I had been arrested, and my ignorance as to the motives of my punishment. He replied in a letter sixteen pages long, recounting all his misfortunes. He had been in prison for four years, for having seduced three young girls, whose children he had had the naïveté to baptize in his own name. The first escapade had brought him a lecture from his superior, the second a threat of chastisement, and the third the realisation of the threat. The father superior of his convent sent him his dinner daily. He said that the superior and the tribunal were tyrants, that they had no authority over his conscience; that, persuaded that the children were his, he considered he only acted honestly in giving them his name; and that he was not able to stifle the voice of nature speaking in favour of these innocent creatures.

I knew I should never be pardoned: if I were ever to regain my liberty it must be by my own exertions, and the only way out of my cell was through the ceiling, for every morning they sounded the boards and walls. I could not pierce the ceiling, it must be done from the other side. There was but one person who could help me, and that was the monk; I began by asking him if he wanted to be free. He replied that he and his comrade would do anything to break their chains, but all the projects which suggested themselves were impossible. I gave him my word of honour that he would succeed if he would only promise to obey me implicitly.

I then described my tool to him, and told him I would find means of sending it to him; with it he must break through the ceiling of his cell, and then through the wall, so that I could join him. 'This done,' said I, 'your share will be finished, I will undertake the rest.'

He replied that even if he managed to make these two apertures we should still be in prison; we should merely ex-

change our cells for the garret, which was closed by three barred doors.

'I know that, reverend father,' I answered, 'but I do not propose to leave by the doors. Tell Laurence to buy you about forty big religious pictures, and stick them up all over your cell. Such a pious proceeding will not arouse any suspicion in his mind, and will hide the hole in the ceiling; if you ask me why I don't do this myself, it is because I am looked on with distrust, and any new departure of mine would be carefully criticised.'

These instructions he carried out, and in a short time wrote and told me that the walls of his room were well decorated, and that he had even managed to fix two or three of the largest pictures on the ceiling.

On the day of the feast of Saint Michael I told Laurence I wanted to cook a dish of macaroni myself, seasoned to my own taste, and that I should like to send some of it to the person who lent me the books. He made no objection, and brought me all the necessary ingredients. I hid the pike in the back of the Bible (it poked out about two inches at each end), put a huge dish of macaroni and cheese, swimming in butter, on the top of the book, and handed it all to Laurence with instructions to be careful and not spill any grease on the cover. He was too much occupied with the smoking macaroni to notice anything peculiar about the book, and it was a beautiful sight to see him bearing it out carefully on outstretched arms, his eyes fixed on the dish, grumbling at me the while for having put in too much butter; he declared if it was spilt it would not be his fault. He returned in a few minutes to tell me that it had travelled safely.

Father Balbi got to work at once, and in eight days made a sufficiently large hole in his ceiling, hiding it in the daytime with a picture stuck on with paste made of bread. On the eight of October he wrote that he had passed the whole night working on the wall which separated us, and had only succeeded in removing one brick. He immensely

exaggerated the difficulty of separating the bricks, which were held together with a strong cement, but he promised to continue, though, he added, he was convinced we should only aggravate our situation.

Alas! though I assured him that on the contrary we should succeed, I was not really sure of anything, except that I wanted to get out of my horrible prison, and that to do so I was determined to brave every danger.

On the sixteenth of October, at ten o'clock in the morning, as I was translating an ode from Horace, I heard a slight movement above my head, followed by three little taps. This was the signal agreed upon between us.

Balbi worked until the evening, and next day wrote that he hoped to finish that same afternoon. The hole, he said, was a circular one, and he must take great care not to pierce my ceiling. This was most important, for the slightest appearance of dilapidation in my cell would betray us.

I fixed on the following night to leave my cell never to return. I was sure that with help I could make a hole in the roof of the ducal palace, and in three or four hours, once outside, I would find some means to get to the ground in safety.

But fate was once more against me. That same day, it was a Monday, at two o'clock in the afternoon, while Balbi was working overhead, I heard the door of the outer cell open. I had only just time to give the alarm signal for him to retire into his cell, when Laurence appeared with two archers, and a little badly dressed man, whose arms were tightly bound. The gaoler apologised for bringing me a very bad character as a companion, and the person thus described paid not the slightest attention to him or to me.

'The tribunal must do as it pleases,' said I, in a tone of ill-assumed resignation. Laurence had a straw mattress brought for my fellow-prisoner, and told him the tribunal allowed him ten sols a day for his food; he then left, locking us in together.

I was in despair at this fresh *contretemps*, but as I wished

to gain the scoundrel over to my side, I told him he could have his meals with me. He kissed my hand gratefully, asking if he might, all the same, keep the ten sols which the tribunal allowed him per diem. When I said yes, he fell on his knees, and lugging an immense rosary out of his pocket, began to examine the four corners of the room.

'What are you looking for?'

'Pardon me, sir. I am looking for a picture of the Blessed Virgin, or a tiny little crucifix would do, for I am a Christian, and never in my life had I such need of prayer. I want to recommend myself to Saint Francis of Assisi, whose name I unworthily bear.'

I thought it possible that he imagined me to be a Jew; therefore, to prove that I was at heart as good a Christian as he was, I gave him the Office of the Blessed Virgin. After kissing the picture in the beginning of the book, he asked my permission to tell his beads, after which pious recreation he begged me to give him something to eat, as he was dying of hunger. He ate everything I had to offer him, and drank the remainder of my wine, which made him very intoxicated, so that he wept and chattered at the same time.

From his prolific but disconnected conversation, I gathered that he was a spy in the service of the Inquisition, but that not satisfied with one master, he had tried to place his talents at the disposition of two. It would take a cleverer rogue than he to play such a dangerous game successfully. The Holy Tribunal had discovered his treachery, and clapped him into prison.

As soon as he was asleep I wrote to Balbi, telling him not to lose courage, that it was necessary to suspend our work for the time being, but that I hoped to be relieved of my companion ere long. The next day I ordered Laurence to procure me a picture of Saint Francis, a crucifix, and two bottles of holy water, four times as much wine as I usually consumed, and an immense quantity of garlic and salt: these last two articles were the favourite dessert of my fellow-captive. Laurence told me that Soradaci, that was the scoun-

drel's name, was to go before the secretary in a few days to be questioned; he would very likely be set at liberty after that. I felt certain that his treasonable instinct would lead him to betray even me, from whom he had received nothing but kindness, but I determined to make sure. I wrote two letters on indifferent subjects but creditable to me in sentiment, one to M. de Bragadin, and one to the Abbé Grimani, and these I confided to Soradaci, begging him if he regained his liberty to deliver them. He swore fidelity on the crucifix and the holy pictures, declaring he would let himself be hacked to pieces rather than injure me. He sewed the letters in the lining of his coat. After they had been in his possession two or three days, Laurence came to take him to the secretary. He was absent several hours, and I began to hope that he had gone for ever, when he reappeared.

'You can give me back my letters,' I said, 'you are not likely now to have a chance of delivering them.' At first he tried to put me off, pretending that it was dangerous, the gaoler might come in while he was ripping open his coat; then he protested that in all probability he would be questioned again in a day or two and then set free. Finally, he flung himself on his knees at my feet, and declared that in the presence of the secretary he had been seized with such a fit of terror and trembling that that functionary had suspected something was wrong, and had had him searched. The two letters were of course discovered, and the secretary had confiscated them.

I believed just as much of this cock-and-bull story as I chose. While chuckling inwardly at the success of my ruse, I covered my face with my hands, and flinging myself before the picture of the Virgin, I demanded of her, in loud and solemn tones, vengeance on the miscreant who had broken his sacred vow, after which I lay down on my bed, my face turned to the wall, and during all that night and the following day, I did not say one word in answer to Soradaci's cries, tears, and protestations of repentance. I was acting a part in the comedy I had planned. I wrote to Balbi

to come at seven o'clock that night to finish his work, and to be not one minute earlier or one minute later, and to work for exactly four hours and no longer.

'Our liberty,' said I, 'depends on rigorous exactitude.' It was now the twenty-fifth of October, and the moment when I was to execute my project, or abandon it for ever, was not far distant. The State Inquisitors and the secretary went every year to pass the first three days of November at some village on the mainland. Laurence profited by this absence to get drunk every night, and consequently slept later in the morning.

I had got into that superstitious frame of mind which leads men, at some momentous point of their career, to be influenced by a verse in the Bible or a verse in Virgil. My intellect, weakened by long months of captivity, clamoured for an oracle. I determined to consult the divine poem *Orlando Furioso* by Ariosto. I wrote my question on a slip of paper, with a combination of numbers which was to point out stanza and verse, and I found the following line:—

'Fra il fin d'ottobre e il capo di novembre.'[1]

The aptitude and precision of this verse seemed to me admirable. I won't say that I placed absolute faith in it, but it was excusable of me, I think, to feel elated at the promise it held forth.

The most singular part of this is, that between the end of October and the beginning of November there is only the instant of midnight, and it was precisely on the stroke of twelve on the thirty-first of October that I left my cell.

Soradaci had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, and I judged that the moment had now come to make an impression on his confused and stupid mind, to render it, if possible, more confused and more stupid than usual. I called him, and he dragged himself along the floor to my feet, where, weeping bitterly, he told me that if I refused to forgive him, he should die during the day, for the curse of

[1] 'Between the end of October and the beginning of November.'

the Blessed Virgin was on him; he suffered terribly in his stomach, and his mouth was covered with ulcers.

'Sit down,' said I, 'and eat this soup. Know that Our Lady of the Rosary appeared to me at daybreak, and ordered me to forgive you. You will not die, and you will leave this cell with me. The grief that your horrible treason caused me prevented me from closing my eyes all night, for those letters will certainly condemn me to prison for the rest of my days. My only consolation was the certitude that I should see you die in agony within three days. While in this state of mind, unworthy, I must admit, of a Christian, I had a vision. I saw the Mother of God herself; she spoke to me in these words: "Soradaci is devoted to the Holy Rosary, and for this reason I protect him, and I desire you to pardon him, so as to counteract the curse which he has invoked on himself. As a reward for your generosity in forgiving him, I shall order one of my angels to assume human form and to come down from heaven, and break through the roof of your prison, so that you can escape. You may take Soradaci with you, but only on condition that he swears to abjure the trade of a spy." After these words the Blessed Virgin disappeared.'

The animal, who had listened to me with open eyes and mouth, suddenly asked at what hour the angel would come, and if we should see him?

'He will be here at sunset; we shall not see him, but we shall hear him at work, and he will leave at the hour announced by the Blessed Virgin.'

'Perhaps you only dreamt all this?'

'No, I am sure of what I say. Do you feel that you can give the promise?'

Instead of answering, he curled up on his mattress and went to sleep. He woke up two hours later, and asked if he might take the proposed oath.

'You can put it off,' said I, 'until the angel appears in the cell, but then, if you do not swear to renounce your villainous trade, which has brought you here, and which will lead

you to the gallows, I shall make you stay behind me, for such is the order of the Mother of God, and she will surely withdraw her protection from you.'

I could read on his ugly face that this procrastination was to his taste, for he did not believe in my angelic visitation. He looked compassionately at me, and evidently thought I was wandering; but I smiled inwardly, for I knew the coming of *the angel* would frighten him out of his miserable wits.

An hour before the appointed time we dined. I drank nothing but water, and gave Soradaci all the wine and all the garlic, his beloved delicacy.

At the first stroke of seven I flung myself on my knees, ordering him to do likewise. As soon as I heard a little noise, the other side of the wall, 'The angel is coming!' I cried, prostrating myself, and at the same time giving him a violent blow which toppled him over on his face. We remained for a quarter of an hour in this position, during which time the sound of Balbi's tool was plainly audible. I then permitted him to rise to his knees, and for three hours and a half I recited the rosary, forcing him to repeat it with me. From time to time he fell asleep, but he never interrupted me; now and then he would gaze furtively at the ceiling, and from there to the picture of the Blessed Virgin, as though demanding from her an explanation. At half-past eleven, 'The angel is going—prostrate yourself!' I commanded in a solemn voice.

I made Soradaci swear not only that he would not say a word to Laurence of our heavenly visitor, but also that while the gaoler was in our cell he would lie on his bed, with his face turned to the wall. This precaution was needful, for a wink would have been sufficient to betray us.

It was natural that I should want to regain my liberty, and there were only two ways in which I could manage the scoundrel whom fate had thrown into the same cell with me. I must either subjugate him, or suffocate him; the latter would have been easier, and less dangerous, but does any

man living say that I had better have done so? If there is such a man, I pray God to enlighten him. I think, in acting as I did, I did my duty, and the victory which crowned my exploit may be taken as a sign that Providence was not displeased with me.

Soradaci obeyed me scrupulously, and remained with his face hidden while Laurence was in our cell. I verily believe that if he had made the slightest movement I should have strangled him. When the gaoler had departed I told him that the angel would descend through the roof about noon, that he would bring a pair of scissors with him, and that he (Soradaci happened to be a barber by trade) must cut off my beard and the angel's.

'Will the angel have a beard?'

'Yes. After you have shaved us we shall get out on to the palace roof, break through it, and descend on the Square of Saint Mark, from whence we shall go to Germany.'

He did not answer, and ate his dinner in silence. My heart and mind were too full to eat; I had not been able to sleep for two nights.

At the given moment the angel appeared; Soradaci prostrated himself, while Father Balbi slid through the hole and flung himself into my arms.

'Your task is over,' said I, 'and mine is just beginning.' He gave me back my tool and a pair of scissors with which Soradaci arranged our beards in a very creditable manner. I told the monk to stay with him while I made a tour of inspection. The hole in the wall was narrow, but I managed to squeeze through. I entered Balbi's cell, where I found Count Asquini, a fine-looking old man, whose figure, however, was not made for gymnastic feats, such as climbing about on a steep roof covered with sheets of lead. He asked me what I proposed to do next, and told me he thought I had acted rather lightly and hastily.

'I shall go straight ahead,' I answered, 'until I find liberty or death.'

'You think,' he said, 'that you will get from the roof to

the ground, but I don't see how you are to do that, unless you suddenly grow wings. Anyhow, I dare not go with you; I shall stay here, and pray God for your safety.'

I returned to my cell, where I spent four hours cutting up my sheets, blankets, mattress and palliasse into strips. With these I made a hundred fathom of cord. I made a packet of my coat, cloak, some shirts, stockings and handkerchiefs. We then passed, all three of us, into the count's cell. I had now flung away my Tartufe's mask, and spoke openly before Soradaci.

In two hours, with the aid of the monk, I managed to make a hole in the attic roof. To my horror I saw that it was bright moonlight, and as on fine nights everybody promenades in the Square of Saint Mark, this forced us to wait until midnight; the extraordinary spectacle which we should have presented scrambling about on the leads would certainly have aroused first curiosity and then suspicion.

I asked Count Asquini to lend me thirty sequins, promising to return them as soon as I was safe in Germany, but the poor old man, in spite of his virtues, was a miser at heart. At first he tried to persuade me that I did not require any money; finally, with many tears, he offered me two sequins, which I was obliged to accept.

The first proof which Balbi gave me of his noble character was to tell me ten times over that I had broken my word to him, for I had told him my plan was complete, whereas it was nothing of the sort. He added that had he known this he would not have joined in the enterprise. Count Asquini, with the wisdom of seventy years, tried to persuade me to give it up, telling me that it was hopeless, for even if we fell into the canal, which was the best thing that could happen to us, we should break our arms and legs, for the water was not deep enough to destroy the force of the fall. He was a barrister, and naturally eloquent, but what moved him most, I knew, was his two sequins.

'The steepness of the roof,' he said, 'which is covered with sheets of lead, will not permit you to walk upright.

'The cords you are taking will be useless, for you will find nothing to fasten them to; but supposing you do, one of you will have to lower the other two, after which he will be obliged to go back to his cell. Which of you is capable of this heroic self-sacrifice? Then again, by which side do you hope to get down? Not by the pillars opposite the square, you would be seen; not by the church, for it is enclosed in gates impossible to scale; not by the court, for you would fall into the hands of the archers. On the fourth side is the canal; have you a boat or gondola awaiting you? No, you would have to swin to Saint Apollonia; and even if you swim like sharks, what a state you would be in when you got there!'

This speech, which our desperate circumstances certainly justified, made my blood boil, the more so as it was interlarded with the reproaches of the monk, and the weeping and wailing of Soradaci. Nevertheless, I had the courage to listen to it patiently without answering harshly. I felt I was in a delicate position, the slightest thing might decide the cowardly Balbi to remain, and alone I could not hope to succeed. Soradaci implored me to leave him behind. 'You are the master,' he said, 'but if you order me to follow you it will be to certain death. I shall fall into the canal, I am convinced, and I shall be of no use to you. Let me stay here, and I will pray to Saint Francis for you.' The fool little knew how pleased I was to be rid of him. I borrowed pen and ink from Asquini and wrote the following letter, which I gave to Soradaci:—

'"I shall not perish, but live to sing the praises of the Lord."

'It is the duty of our Lords, the State Inquisitors, to use every means in their power to keep a guilty man in prison, but the prisoner, if he is not on parole, should do everything he can to escape. Their right is based on justice, his on nature. They did not ask his consent to imprison him, he need not ask theirs to set himself free.

'Jacques Casanova, who writes this, in the bitterness of

his heart, knows that he may be recaptured, in which case he appeals to the humanity of his judges not to make his lot harder than that from which he is fleeing. He gives everything in his cell (provided he is not so unlucky as to be brought back to it) to Francis Soradaci, with the exception of his books, which he gives to Count Asquini.

'Written one hour before midnight, without a light, in Count Asquini's cell, the 31st of October 1756.'

I instructed Soradaci to give this letter to the secretary himself, who would doubtless come up to question him and Asquini personally.

It was now time to start. The moon was no longer visible. I tied half the cords on one of Balbi's shoulders, and his packet of clothes on the other, doing the same for myself; then the two of us, in our shirt-sleeves, our hats on our heads, went through the opening.

THE ESCAPE FROM THE LEADS

I went out first, Balbi followed me; Soradaci had orders to put the sheet of lead covering the hole back into its place, and then to go and pray with all his might to Saint Francis. I crawled along on all fours, pushing my tool into the cracks between the leaden roofing, and dragging the monk after me. With his right hand he firmly clutched the band of my breeches, so that I was in the painful position of a pack-horse and saddle-horse combined, and this on a steep lead roof made more slippery by the damp of a thick fog! Half-way up the monk called out to me to stop; one of his packages had slipped, but he was in hopes it had lodged in the gutter piping. My first impulse was to give him a kick and send him after it, but I checked myself, and asked him if it was the packet of cords; he said no, it was his clothes and a manuscript which he had found in the prison attic, and which he expected to sell for a high price. I told him he must bear his loss patiently; he sighed, and we crawled on. By and by we got to a gable, on which we could sit astride; two hundred

feet in front of us were the cupolas of Saint Mark, which is, properly speaking, the private chapel of the Doge, and no monarch in the world can boast of a better or finer. Here my unfortunate companion lost his hat, which rolled over and over till it joined his clothes in the canal. He declared this was a bad omen, but I cheered him by pointing out that if the hat had fallen to the left, instead of to the right, it would have tumbled at the very feet of the guards in the courtyard. It was a proof, I told him, that God was protecting us, and at the same time, it was a lesson to him to be more prudent.

I left Balbi perched on the gable, while I explored the roof in search of some skylight or window, by means of which we could enter the palace. After searching for more than an hour without finding any point to which I could fasten my cords, the canal and the courtyard were not to be thought of; to get beyond the church, towards the *Canonica*, I should have to climb such perilous slopes that I abandoned this idea also. Nevertheless, something must be done. I fixed my eyes on a garret window facing the canal, about two-thirds from the top of the roof. It was far enough away from our part of the palace for me to feel sure it was not connected with the prisons. If I could get in through it I should probably find myself in some attic, inhabited or otherwise, belonging to the apartment of some one of the palace functionaries, and at break of day the doors would be opened. I was morally certain that any of the palace servants, even those of the Doge himself, so far from giving us up to justice, would only help us in our flight, even had we been the worst of criminals, so hateful was the Inquisition in the eyes of all men. I let myself slide down the roof till I arrived astraddle the garret window; by leaning over I could feel it was filled with small panes of glass, behind which was a grating. The glass was easily disposed of, but in my nervous state of mind the grating, slight though it was, filled me with dismay. I was weary, hungry, over-excited, and this obstacle seemed insurmountable. I

was beginning to lose my head, and my courage, when the simplest incident imaginable restored my mental equilibrium. The bell of Saint Mark's struck twelve! The day now beginning was All Saints, the prediction of the Jesuit father flashed through my mind, and at the same moment I remembered the line from Ariosto—

'Fra il fin d'ottobre e il capo di novembre.'

The sound of the bell was as a speaking talisman to me, bidding me be of good heart, and promising me victory. I broke the glass, and after a quarter of an hour's hard work with my pike I lifted out the entire grating; blood was streaming from a wound in my left hand, but I was too excited to notice it.

I got back to my companion, who welcomed me with the grossest insults, for having left him so long, at the same time assuring me he was only waiting for seven o'clock to return to the prison. 'And what did you think had become of me?'

'I thought you had fallen over.'

'And this is how you show your joy at my safety! Follow me now, and you will see where I have been.'

We scrambled to the garret window, and held a consultation as to the best means of entering it; it was easy enough for one, as the other could lower him by the cords, but how was he to follow after?

'Let me down first,' said the amiable Balbi, 'and when I am safe inside you will find some means of rejoining me.' His brutal selfishness made me feel like digging my pike in his stomach, but I again restrained myself, and silently did as he asked. When I drew up the cord, I found the height from the window to the floor was fifty feet, the window was high in the roof of an immensely lofty gallery. Not knowing what to do, I wandered over the leads, where, on a sort of terrace I had not visited before, I found a tub full of plaster, a trowel, and a ladder. I dragged the ladder after me to the window, and managed to push it in as far as the fifth rung, but beyond that it was impossible, as there was

an interior beam, which barred its entrance. The only thing was to push it from below instead of from above, as I was then doing. I fastened the cord to the ladder, and let it slip, till it hung balanced on a point of the gutter piping, and then slid gently along till I was beside it. The marble gutter offered a slight rest to my feet, and I lay on my stomach up the roof; in this position I had the strength to raise the ladder and push it before me. I got about a foot of it inside, which diminished the weight sensibly, when in my efforts to force it I slipped, and rolled over the roof, hanging only by my elbows to the gutter. In this frightful position I remained, as it seemed to me, some moments, but did not lose my presence of mind; the instinct of self-preservation made me, almost against my will, use all my strength in the supreme effort of hoisting myself back on the roof. I succeeded. I now lay along the gutter, panting and exhausted, but safe for the moment, though not out of danger, or at an end of my troubles, for the effort I had made caused a nervous contraction of my muscles, which resulted in a cramp so painful I completely lost the use of my limbs. I knew that immobility is the best remedy for cramp, and I had the sense to remain perfectly still until it passed away. What a terrible moment it was! By and by I was able to move my knees, and as soon as I had recovered my breath, I raised the ladder (which had fortunately been held in place by the frame of the window), and managed to introduce several more rungs of it through the opening, until it leaned parallel with the sill.

I then took up my pike, and once more climbed slowly and painfully up the slippery leads, till I got to the window, where I had no further difficulty with the ladder. I pushed it all in, and my companion held the other end of it firmly.

I flung into the attic the remaining parcels of clothes, the cords, and such *débris* and rubbish caused by my demolitions as I could gather up. I was particularly anxious not to leave any marks of my passage behind me on the roof. It was there that the archers, led by Laurence, would first search

for us, and it was possible that we might still be lurking in the attic when they came that way. This done, I descended the ladder into the garret, where the monk received me, more graciously this time.

Arm in arm we walked round the shadowy place in which we found ourselves. It was about thirty feet long by twenty wide; at one end was a door barred with iron; this, however, was not locked, and we went through it into another room, in the middle of which was a big table surrounded with chairs and stools. We opened one of the windows, but could see nothing but precipices, so to speak, between the windows. I closed the window, and went back to where we had left our baggage. Perfectly incapable of further effort, I fell on the floor; with a roll of cords to serve for a pillow, I gave myself up to sleep. Had I been certain that death, or torture, awaited me on waking, it would have made no difference. Even now I can remember the heavenly sensations of rest and forgetfulness which came over me as I sank to slumber.

I slept for three hours and a half: the monk aroused me by shouting and shaking me. He told me it had struck five, and he could not understand how, given our position, I could sleep! *I* could, though! For two days and nights I had not closed my eyes, and for the same length of time had eaten nothing; the efforts I had made were enough to wear out the strength of any man. My nap had restored my vigour, I was able now to think and to act.

'This place,' said I, 'is not a prison, so there must be some way out of it.'

There was a door at one end, through which we passed into a gallery lined with shelves filled with papers: these were the archives, as I afterwards learned. A little stone staircase took us to a second gallery, and a second staircase into a large hall, which I recognised as the ducal chancery. On a desk lay a tool, a sort of long slim chisel which the secretaries use to pierce parchments with, so as to attach the lead seals of the chancery to them. I forced the desk with it,

and found a letter to the *proveditor* of Corfu, announcing the despatch of three thousand sequins, which he was to spend on the restoration of the old fortress. Unfortunately the money was not there; God knows with what pleasure I should have taken it had it been otherwise!

I tried to force the door of the chancery with my chisel, but soon saw that it was impossible. I decided to make a hole in the panelling. With my pike I smashed and battered as well as I could, the monk helping me with the chisel, and both of us trembling at the noise we made.

In half an hour the hole was large enough, but it presented a terrific appearance, for the edges were splintered and broken, and bristling with sharp points, like the spikes on the top of a wall; it was about five feet from the ground. Putting two stools one on the other, we mounted on them, and taking Balbi first by the thighs and then by the ankles, I managed to lower him in safety. There was no one to help me, so I stuck my head and shoulders through as far as I could, and told the monk to drag me over the splinters, and not to stop, even if I reached the other side in pieces; he obeyed, and I arrived in frightful pain, with my hips and thighs torn and bleeding.

We ran down another staircase, at the bottom of which was the great door of the royal staircase. At one glance I saw that it was impossible to get through that without a mine to blow it up, or a catapult to beat it down. My poor pike seemed to say: *Hic finis posuit.*

Calm, resigned and perfectly tranquil, I sat down, saying to the monk: 'I have done, it is for God or fortune to do the rest. I don't know if the palace sweepers will come to-day, as it is a holiday—All Saints Day, or to-morrow, which is All Souls. If any one does come, I shall make a run for it as soon as I see the door open, but otherwise, I shall not move from here, if I die of hunger.'

At this speech the poor man flew into a rage, calling me madman, seducer, liar. I let him rave without paying any

attention to him. Even if some one opened the door, how to pass unnoticed in the state I was in?

Balbi looked like a peasant, but he was at least intact. His scarlet flannel waistcoat and his violet skin breeches were in good condition, and he was unscratched, whereas my appearance was horrible. I was covered with blood, and my clothes were in ribbons. I had torn my stockings, and scraped all the skin off my knees while I was hanging from the gutter piping; the broken panel of the chancery door had caught and rent my waistcoat, shirt, and breeches into rags. My thighs were furrowed with deep wounds.

I bandaged myself up as well as I could with handkerchiefs, smoothed my hair, put on a clean pair of stockings and a laced shirt with two others on the top of it, stuffed as many handkerchiefs and stockings as I could into my pockets, and flung the remainder into a corner.

I must have looked like a reveller who had wound up the evening in some wild orgy! To crown all I put on my fine hat, trimmed with Spanish gold lace, and a long white feather; and thus attired I opened a window. It is not surprising that I immediately attracted the attention of the loungers in the courtyard, one of whom went to tell the concierge. The good man thought he must have locked some one in by mistake the night before, and ran off for his keys. I heard them jingling as he came upstairs; I could hear him puffing at every step. I told Balbi to keep close to me, and not to open his mouth. I stood, my pike in my hand, so that I could get out of the door the moment it was opened. I prayed to God that the concierge would make no resistance, as I was prepared to kill him if need were.

The poor fellow was thunderstruck at my aspect. I rushed past him and down the stairs, the monk at my heels. I went rapidly, yet avoiding the appearance of flight, down the magnificent steps called the Giant's Staircase, paying no heed to Balbi, who kept saying, 'To the church, to the church.' The door of Saint Mark's was not twenty paces away, but one could no longer take sanctuary there. The monk knew

that, but fear had spoilt his memory. I went straight through the royal gate of the palace, across the little square, and on to the quay, where I got into the first gondola I saw, saying to the boatman, 'I want to go to Fusina quickly; call up another gondolier.' While the boat was being unfastened I flung myself on the cushion in the middle, while the monk took his place on the seat. We must have been an odd-looking couple: he with his extraordinary face and bare head, my beautiful cloak flung over his shoulders, and I with my most unseasonable elegance, plumed hat, and ragged breeches, laced shirt and bleeding wrists. We must have looked like a pair of charlatans who had been in some drunken fray.

When we were well started I told the boatman I had changed my mind, I would go to Mestre. He replied that he would take me to England if I would pay him enough, and we went gaily on.

The canal had never seemed to me so beautiful, more especially as there was not a single boat in sight. It was a lovely morning, the air was fresh and clear and the sun had just risen. My two boatmen rowed swiftly. I thought on the awful nights I had passed, the dangers I had traversed, the hell in which only a few hours before I was imprisoned; my emotion and my gratitude to God overcame me, and I burst into tears. My worshipful companion, who up till then had not spoken a word, thought it his duty to console me. He made me laugh.

At Mestre I arranged for a post-chaise to take us on to Treviso; in three minutes the horses were in. I looked round for Balbi, he had disappeared; I was on the point of abandoning him when I caught sight of the scamp in a coffee-house, drinking chocolate and flirting with the waiting-maid. When he saw me he called out to me to come and join him, and to pay for what he had consumed, as he was penniless. Speechless with rage, I grasped him by the arm and marched him up to the post-chaise. We had not gone many yards before I met a man I knew, Balbi Tomasi, a decent fellow,

but reported to have dealings with the inquisitors; he recognised me and cried out: 'Hallo! what are you doing here? I am delighted to see you, have you run away?'

'I have not run away, I was set at liberty.'

'Impossible! I was at M. Grimani's only yesterday, and I heard nothing of it.'

Reader, it is easier for you to imagine the state of mind I was in than for me to describe it. I thought this man was paid to arrest me; that in another moment he would call up the police, who were all over Mestre, and I should be ignonominously marched back to 'The Leads.' I jumped out of the carriage, and asked him to step to one side with me. As soon as we were at a safe distance from the others I seized him by the collar; he saw the pike I was brandishing and guessed my intention; with a violent effort he wrenched himself away, and ran with all his might down the road, jumping over a wide ditch, from the other side of which he kissed his hand to me several times, as a sign that I had his good wishes. I was glad I had been saved from committing murder, for I began to think he meant me no harm. I got back into the chaise, looking disdainfully at the cowardly monk, who saw now the danger he had exposed us to, and we went on in silence to Treviso.

There I ordered a chaise and pair for ten o'clock, though I had no intention of taking them, firstly, because I had not enough money, and, secondly, because a post-chaise is easily tracked; it was merely a ruse. The landlord asked if we wished breakfast, but though I was fainting with hunger I had not the courage to eat anything; a quarter of an hour's delay might prove fatal. I wanted to get out into the open country where one man, if he is clever, can defy a hundred thousand.

We passed out of Treviso by Saint Thomas's gate, and struck across the fields. After walking for three hours I fell down exhausted. I told Balbi to get me something to eat or I should die; he said contemptuously that he had thought I was braver. He had filled his own stomach full before leav-

ing 'The Leads,' and he had taken some chocolate and bread since. However, he found a farmhouse not far off, and brought me back a good dinner for thirty sols; after which we walked for another four hours, and then stopped by the roadside, twenty-four miles from Treviso. I was exhausted; my ankles were swollen and my shoes worn through.

I felt that it was impossible for me to continue to travel with Balbi; to think for him as well as myself, and to be constantly bickering and reproaching one another. His presence irritated me in my worn and nervous state, and I felt willing to pay any price to be rid of him.

'We must go to Borgo di Valsugano,' I said; 'it is the first town across the frontier of the Republic; we shall be as safe there as if we were in London; but we must use every precaution, and the first is to separate. You will go by the woods of Mantello, and I by the mountains; you will take the easiest and shortest way, and I the longest and most difficult; you will have money, and I shall have none. I make you a present of my cloak, which you can easily change for a coat and a hat; here is all that is left of the two sequins I took from Asquini. You will be at Borgo the day after to-morrow, in the evening, and I shall turn up about twenty-four hours later. Wait for me at the inn which is on the left, the last house in the town. For to-night I shall trust to luck to find me a bed somewhere. I am absolutely in need of rest and peace, which I can't get with you. I am, moreover, certain that they are looking for us, and that if we show ourselves together at any inn we shall be arrested. You go your way, and let me go mine.'

'I have been expecting some such speech,' said Balbi, 'and shall answer it by reminding you of all your promises. You said we should not separate, and I do not intend to; your fate shall be mine, and mine yours.'

'You are determined not to take my advice?'

'Most determined.'

'We shall see.'

I took my instrument out of my pocket, and began quietly

to dig a hole in the ground. After half an hour of this occupation I told him to recommend his soul to God, for the hole I had just made was to bury him in.

'I will get rid of you somehow—alive or dead.'

He looked at me for some time in silence, wondering whether I was in earnest or not, then coming over to me—'I will do as you wish,' he said.

I embraced him, handed him the money, and renewed my promise to meet him at Borgo.

I cannot say how pleased I was to see him disappear down the road. His presence paralysed me. As soon as he was out of sight I got up and walked across country till I came in sight of a little village. A shepherd was feeding his flock on the hillside, and I asked him the name of the village and its principal inhabitants. One red house which was conspicuous among the rest he told me belonged to the captain of the local police. I cannot explain the instinct which led me to go straight up to this house, the very one that I should have avoided. A little child was spinning a top in the courtyard; I spoke to it and it went and called its mother. A pretty young woman came out, and asked me politely if I wished to see her husband, as unfortunately he was away from home.

'I am sorry,' said I, 'that my *confrère* is absent, but I am charmed to make the acquaintance of his wife.'

'His *confrère*! then I am speaking to M. Vetturi. My husband will be so sorry to miss you.'

'I hope he will be back soon, for I was going to ask him to let me sleep here to-night. I really cannot go on in the state I am in.'

'You shall have the best bed in the house, and a good supper, but I do not expect my husband back for three or four days. Two prisoners have escaped from 'The Leads,' one a patrician, and the other an individual named Casanova, and my husband has had orders from the inquisitors to search for them. But what have you done to your knees?'

'I was shooting in the mountains, and I slipped on some

sharp rocks. I lost a good deal of blood, and it has made me very weak.'

'O poor gentleman! My mother, who lives with us, will soon cure you.'

This archer's pretty wife had very little professional acumen. Hunting in a silk coat and white silk stockings! How her husband must have laughed at her afterwards; but I am sure God rewarded her innocent kindness.

Her mother dressed my wounds most tenderly, lecturing me on foolhardiness the while she washed and bandaged me. She gave me a good supper, and probably undressed me like a child, for I fell asleep to wake next morning in bed, rested in body and mind, my wounds almost healed. I had slept for twelve hours.

I dressed myself quickly, went downstairs, out of the house, and across the yard, without taking any notice of two men who were standing there, and who were very likely policemen. I walked straight ahead of me, and soon left the village behind. My heart was full of gratitude to the kindly, hospitable women who had fed and tended me. I only regretted that I was unable to thank them for their goodness. I walked for five hours till I came to a church, the bell of which was ringing. It was All Souls Day, and the villagers were flocking in to Mass. I joined the number, being in the reckless frame of mind when a man will follow his lightest whim. Coming out of church I met Mark Anthony Grimani, nephew of my guardian, the state inquisitor.

'What are you doing here, Casanova, and where is your companion?'

'I gave him all the money I had, and he has taken another road. If your Excellency would give me a little help I could easily manage now.'

'I can give you nothing, but you will find hermits along the road who will not let you starve; but tell me how you escaped from "The Leads"?'

'My story would no doubt interest you, but it is long, and

in the meanwhile the hermits may eat up the provisions which are to prevent me from dying of hunger.'

I bowed ironically and went my way. In spite of my extreme need I was not displeased at this refusal. It made me feel that I was a far finer gentleman than this patrician, who bade me beg from the monks. I learned afterwards that his wife reproached him bitterly for his hard-heartedness. There is no doubt that benevolence and generosity is commoner among women than men.

I continued my way until sunset; then, tired, harassed, and hungry, I stopped at a lonely, decent-looking house. I asked the concierge if I could see the master. He answered that his master had gone to a wedding, but had ordered him to welcome any friends who might come during his absence. So luck favoured me a second time, and again I found a good supper and a good bed.

The next day I dined at a Capuchin monastery, and in the afternoon came to a villa, the owner of which was a friend of mine. I was shown into his study, where he was writing. He dropped his pen in alarm when he saw me, and told me to be off at once. I asked him to lend me sixty sequins, offering him my note of hand, drawn on M. de Bragadin, but he answered that he could give me nothing, not even a glass of water, lest he incurred the anger of the tribunal. He was a money-changer, a man about sixty years old, and under great obligations to me.

Shaking with rage, I seized him by the collar, and pulling out my pike threatened to kill him if he did not help me. He opened a drawer full of gold, in his desk, and told me to take what I wanted.

'Count me out six sequins,' I said.

'You asked for sixty.'

'Yes—as a friendly loan; but as I must take them by force I will only have six, and I will give you no receipt for them. They shall be paid you back, though, at Venice, where I shall write and tell of your mean and cowardly conduct;

and now let me go quietly, or I will come back and burn your house down over your head.'

I slept at a peasant's hut that night, and in the morning bought an old redingote, a pair of boots, and a donkey; further on I exchanged the ass for a cart and two horses, and with this equipage arrived at Borgo di Valsugano, where I found Balbi. If he had not spoken to me I should not have known him. A long riding-coat and a felt hat worn over a cotton night-cap disguised him completely. He told me a farmer had given him these things in exchange for my cloak, that he had eaten well along the road, and had met with no adventures.

I passed two days in bed writing letters to Venice, in all of which I spoke of the money-changer and his brutality. I went on to Bolzan, where an old banker of my acquaintance lent me a trusty messenger to carry news to M. de Bragadin. He returned in six days with a hundred sequins, and I began to clothe my companion and myself. The miserable Balbi was perpetually reminding me that but for him I should never have escaped, that whatever fortune I might make eventually, half of it would belong by rights to him. He made love to all the servants, and, as he was anything but handsome, met with many rebuffs, which he accepted with true philosophy, beginning again the next day. From Bolzan we went to Munich, where I lodged at 'The Stag.' I found my old friend the Countess Coronini, who was living at the Convent of Saint Justine, and was in high favour at Court. She told me that she had spoken of me to the Elector, who said there was no reason why I should not remain in Bavaria, but that he could not guarantee the safety of Balbi —a runaway monk.

I got a letter of introduction to the Dean of Saint Maurice, at Augsburg, and packed Balbi off to him, in a carriage, with everything he could want. I was glad to be rid of him so cheaply, and in four days received a letter from him saying the dean had received him kindly.

My health was much impaired. I was suffering from a

constriction of the nerves, which alarmed me somewhat, but a month's rest and a strict régime restored me completely.

Some Venetian friends of mine, Madame Rivière and her family, came to Munich during this time. They were going on to Paris for the marriage of the eldest daughter, and offered to take me with them. They would not hear of my bearing any share of the expense, and I thankfully accepted the offer. Two days before leaving I received another remittance from Venice, and as I felt it my duty to convince myself of Balbi's well-being, I took a post-chaise to Augsburg. I found him well lodged, well served, and well clothed, and congratulated him on his good fortune. He asked me bitterly what I meant by that, saying that he had not a penny in his pocket.

'Ask your friends for some money.'

'I have no friends.'

'That must be because you have never been a friend to any one but yourself.'

'Take me with you to Paris.'

'What would you do there?'

'Why, what will you do?'

'Work, and put my talents to account. Your wings are strong enough now for you to fly alone. I have done all I can for you, and you ought to be grateful for the comfortable situation you are in.'

Some months later the dean wrote to me that Balbi had run away with one of his women servants, taking with him a large sum of money, a gold watch, and twelve silver forks and spoons. The dishonest wretch took refuge at Coire, in Switzerland, where he asked to be received into the Calvinist Church, and to be recognised as the legitimate husband of the woman who was with him. When he had spent all his money his wife left him, and he went to Brescia, a town belonging to the Venetian States, where he assured the governor of his repentance, begging him to take him under his protection. He was sent in chains to Venice, and reimprisoned in 'The Leads,' where he remained two years, and

was then sent to an isolated monastery near Feltre, whence he escaped to Rome. The Pope dispensed him from his monastic vows. As a secular priest he was no longer in the power of the Inquisition, and he returned to Venice, where he led a dissolute and miserable life, dying in 1783.

We journeyed to Paris in a most excellent and comfortable *berline*, and I did my best to entertain my companions, and render myself as amusing and serviceable as possible in return for their generosity. We arrived on the 5th of January 1757. I went straight to my friend Baletti, who received me with open arms, though I had not written to him. He was expecting me, for he had heard of my flight from prison, and knew that it would be necessary for me to get as far from Venice as possible.

There was general rejoicing in the house when they knew of my arrival. This interesting family was devoted to me.

CHAPTER XIV

MADEMOISELLE DE LA MEURE

So here I was once more in Paris, glorious Paris. I was beginning to learn to look upon it as my adopted country, for I could not hope to return to the one which had given me birth. I was no stranger to Paris, but hitherto I had considered it only as a centre of amusement; now I considered it as the field on which my fortune was to be won. I must bring into play all my physical and mental powers; I must become acquainted with great and influential persons, take my colour from them, and do everything in my power to please them.

'I will be,' I said to myself, 'reserved in speech and behaviour, and this will gain me a reputation the fruits of which I shall gather by and by.'

My adopted father, good, generous M. de Bragadin, had promised me an allowance of a hundred crowns a month, so that I was fairly well provided for, and could wait till chance served me.

Naturally enough my first idea was to address myself to the late French ambassador to Venice; he was then in high favour at Court, and I knew him well enough to be sure of his support.

I told the story of my escape in every salon: it took me two good hours. I wrote a letter which I took myself to the Palais Bourbon, left it, and waited. Next morning at eight o'clock I received a note giving me an appointment for the same day.

M. de Bernis received me most cordially; he told me he had heard of my escape.

I promised M. de Bernis to write out the account of my

adventures. On taking leave of me he very gracefully slid a rouleau of a hundred louis into my hands; I spent this money on replenishing my wardrobe, which was excessively meagre. I wrote my story in eight days, and sent it to my generous protector, authorising him to have as many copies of it printed as he liked, and begging him to distribute them to such persons as he thought would be useful to me.

Three weeks after he told me he had spoken about me to M. Erizzo, the Venetian ambassador, who said, that though personally he had no cause for reproach, he should prefer not to receive me, as he did not wish to get into trouble with the Holy Office. M. de Bernis also told me that he had given my narrative to the Marquise de Pompadour, and that he would take an early opportunity of presenting me to that influential lady. 'You can go, my dear Casanova,' he said. 'to M. de Choiseul and to the comptroller-general, M. de Boulogne; you will be well received, coming from me; if you are clever you will be able to do something with the latter. Try and invent something which will bring money into the royal coffers, but avoid complications and chimerical combinations.'

For the moment I could think of nothing which would add to the king's revenues except new taxes; but I went to M. de Choiseul. He received me in the dressing-room, where he was writing, while his valet dressed his hair. He put several questions to me, writing all the time I was answering them. When he had finished his letter, he said, 'Tell me how you managed to escape from prison.'

'Your Excellency, it would take at least two hours to tell you, and you appear to be very busy.'

'Tell me, in brief, how did you get through the roof?'

'I could not tell you that in less than half an hour.'

'Why were you imprisoned?'

'The interest of my story, your Excellency, lies in its details, and they are lengthy.'

'Well, you will tell me them some other time. I must go

to Versailles now; come and see me again. And in the meantime how can I be of use to you?'

I had been somewhat put out by his careless reception of me; but these last words were said so kindly that my good humour returned.

Then I went to M. de Boulogne, in appearance, manners, and costume a very different person from the Duc de Choiseul. He was old, and looked clever, and I respected him.

'Tell me your views,' he said, 'either now or in writing. M. Pâris Duverny wants twenty million francs for his military college, and we must find that sum without charging the state or depleting the royal treasury.'

'I have a scheme in my head which would bring the king the interest on a hundred millions,' I said.

'How much would it cost?'

'Nothing, but the expense of collecting.'

'I know of what you are thinking.'

'I am surprised at that, sir, for I have told no one.'

'Come and dine with me and M. Duverny to-morrow, and we will talk it over.'

Duverny, the financier, was honest and honourable. He was the brother of de Montmartel; scandal said he was the father of Madame de Pompadour.

On leaving the comptroller-general I went and walked about in the Tuileries Gardens, reflecting on this strange turn of fortune. On hearing that the king needed twenty millions, I had incontinently declared I could procure a hundred, without the faintest idea where they were to come from. This hard man of business had asked me to dinner to prove to me that he had already grasped my scheme before I told him of it. 'I must,' I thought, 'first find out what Duverny and Boulogne have in their minds, perhaps I can suggest some amendment to their scheme, or else preserve a mysterious and provocative silence.'

The dinner was to be at Duverny's house at Plaisance, a little beyond Vincennes. I presented myself at the door of the man who had drawn France out of the gulf into which,

forty years before, Law's system of gambling operations had plunged her.

There were several people at dinner, and the conversation was exceedingly tiresome. The death of Fontenelle was discussed, and the trial of Damiens, which was to cost five millions. When dessert was served, however, the host, leaving his guests, begged me to follow him into another room. There we found a man of about fifty, who was presented to me as M. de Calsabigi. Duverny, taking a book from his hand, gave it to me, saying, with a smile, 'M. Casanova, here is your project.'

On the first page of the book I read—

'A lottery of ninety tickets; each lot, which is to be drawn once a month, can only fall on five numbers.'

'I own, sir,' said I, 'that that is my project.'

We spent the remainder of the night discussing the means of organising the lottery, and I may say, without vanity, that the amendments and rectifications I proposed were so valuable as to lead them at once to acknowledge their importance. Calsabigi's scheme was a crude one, but I soon convinced them of my power to develop it into a working possibility.

It would be tedious to describe at length all our calculations; suffice it to say that M. l'Alembert was called in, in his quality of arithmetician, and that he perfectly approved of my plan. De Bernis presented me to Madame de Pompadour, who was good enough to remember that she had met me some five years previously, when my bad French had considerably amused her. My knowledge of the language, she said, had increased since then, and become so perfect that I ought seriously to think of taking out papers of naturalisation. She showed the deepest interest in the lottery; and in eight days the council passed a decree authorising it. The scheme was briefly this: to limit the winning numbers to five; had they been six it would have been perfectly fair; as it was, the sixth fell to the State, so that the king would draw every month a profit of a hundred thousand crowns.

I was offered six of the receiving offices and four thousand francs a year from the profits of the lottery. Calsabigi was to have three thousand francs at each drawing, and the head office in the Rue Montmartre; he was far better paid than I was, but I was not jealous, as I knew that in reality the idea was his. I rented five of my offices for two thousand francs a year each, and the sixth, in the Rue Saint Denis, I furnished in a most luxurious manner, and put my valet in charge. He was a very intelligent young Italian, who had been in the service of the Prince de la Catolica.

As I wanted to attract people to my office, I posted bills stating that all winning tickets signed by me would be paid within twenty-four hours. This took with the crowd, and we sold many more tickets in the Rue Saint Denis than at the other offices. My first receipt was forty thousand francs, out of which we had eighteen thousand francs prizes to pay. I had provided myself with the necessary funds, knowing I should be reimbursed. As there was no delay, our office became the popular one: my valet was on the road to fortune, for each winner gave him something for himself. The total receipts were ten million francs. Paris alone furnished four millions, and the State made a profit of six hundred thousand francs; this was not bad for the first time! The Parisians had won a number of small prizes, which gave the lottery a brilliant reputation; it was easy to predict that the next time the receipts would be doubled.

I must now go back to the first month of my second sojourn in Paris. My brother François returned to Paris. Shortly after my arrival there he came from Dresden, where he had spent four years studying, and copying all the famous battle pictures. We met with mutual pleasure, but on my offering to use my influence to facilitate his reception into the Academy, he replied proudly that he wanted no recommendation but his own talent.

'The French,' he said, 'rejected me once. I bear them no grudge for doing so, but to-day I hope for a better reception.'

He painted a very fine picture, which he exhibited at the Louvre. It was received with acclamation, and the Academy bought it for twelve thousand francs. He became famous, and in twenty-six years made over a million francs, but his foolish extragagance, and two unfortunate marriages he made, kept him a poor man.

In the month of March, my dear old friend, Madame Manzoni, sent me all my manuscripts and miniatures, which the reader will remember I had placed in safety with her some time before my incarceration in 'The Leads.' The messenger was a young Venetian nobleman, the Count de Tiretta.

The jolly Tiretta offered to introduce me to a friend of a friend of his, Madame Lambertini, widow of the Pope's nephew. The curious title interested me. I went with Tiretta, and found neither widow nor Pope's niece, but an out-and-out adventuress by profession and inclination. She began an intrigue with Tiretta at once, and I did the same with a pretty girl, Mlle. de la Meure, who was there with her aunt, whom I treated at first with but scant respect; I could not conceive of any respectable young woman living under the wing of La Lambertini. They all played at cards, and the pretty niece was told off to amuse me. For a moment she left me and went to stand behind her fat aunt's chair, but was sent back to me, because, said the old lady, she brought her ill luck. That evening I prosecuted my attentions with so much fervour, that a few days afterwards Mlle. de la Meure wrote to me saying that her aunt was trying to marry her to a rich merchant of Dunkirk.

'She knows no more of him than I do, but the *courtier de mariage* speaks highly of him; what else could he do? Still, if what has passed between us has not injured me in your estimation, I propose myself to you as a wife, with seventy-five thousand francs, and as much more when my aunt dies.'

This touched me, but the idea of marriage appalled me as usual. She gave me four days to think it over; they were

enough to convince me that I did not love her enough. I went to dine at La Lambertini's, where I was to meet her, all the same. She came looking lovely, and in the presence of her aunt I arranged to take them all with me to see the execution of Damiens on the 28th of March. All Paris was going, and I rushed out, took a *fiacre*, and hired a splendid window for three louis. When I came back I fell into a *tête-à-tête* with Mlle. de la Meure, and weakly promised to marry her. I bade her, however, place no obstacle in the way of the threatened visit of the Dunkirk merchant, her suitor, to Paris.

On the day of the execution [1] I fetched the three ladies from their house, and as the *fiacre* was small, I took Mlle. de la Meure on my knee. The window I had chosen had two steps: the ladies were on the front one, and I and Tiretta stood behind looking over their shoulders. We stayed four hours. Every one knows about Damiens: he was a fanatic, who to gain heaven tried to kill the king. He managed to do little more than scratch the king, but he was tortured as if his crime had been fully consummated. I must say that I had to turn aside from the sight of the martyrdom of this victim of the Jesuits, and to stop my ears to keep out his piercing shrieks of agony—the poor creature was literally torn in pieces; but the sight did not affect La Lambertini and the fat aunt of Mlle. de la Meure in the least—indeed I was amused to see that Tiretta was teasing and cajoling and caressing the latter all the time. This was sheer hardness of heart, and I had to pretend to believe when they told me that the horror inspired in them by the monster's attempt had completely killed all sense of pity. After this long day we left the ladies at their house,

[1] The torture and execution of Damiens took place on the Place de la Grève, of which one side sloped away to the Seine. He was broken on the wheel, and torn in pieces by four horses. The process lasted four hours. The attitude of the two ladies was the conventional one of all Parisians at the period. Their English sisters, in their avidity for sights like public hangings, did not leave them far behind. But surely the incident of the 'fat aunt' here recorded outdoes all in cynicism and callousness.

and Tiretta and I went to dine at the Hôtel de Russie, where I scolded him for the lightness of his conduct.

When I went again to see Mlle. de la Meure, the dear good aunt came in and told me that Tiretta had made his peace with her, and that she was going to take him under her roof *en pension* for a year! To her niece she said, 'Be ready after dinner to start for La Villette, where we will stay all the spring. And hist! you needn't tell my sister all about it.'

'Oh no, aunt. Do I ever tell of you?'

'Just hear her! One would think from the way she talks that this sort of thing happened every day!'

I laughed. We dined together, and then they departed all three for La Villette, and I went to spend the rest of the evening at the Italian players.

Three days later I went to stay a day or two. An actress called Quinault, and Madame Favart, and the Abbé Voisenon were fellow-guests. The Dunkirk merchant was expected, but did not come till I left. I went again to La Villette to see him, and found the young lady dressed up in his honour. He was handsome and charming. We dined, we talked, but not Mlle. de la Meure. When the merchant was about to leave for Paris, the aunt begged him to come again to-morrow, and asked her niece to second the invitation. She obediently did so, and if she had not, he would have left the house without having once heard the sound of the voice of his affianced.

When he had gone—

'Well, what do you think of your future husband?'

'Let me off answering, dear aunt, for the present, but put me next him to-morrow and make me talk, for, even if he approves my appearance, my conversation may disgust him. One must not take people in. Perhaps he won't have me when he finds how stupid I am.'

'I know you don't mean that; you think yourself clever,' said the aunt, 'and M. Casanova tells you so, I'll be bound.'

'He knows what he is talking about,' she said.

Then we played cards, and went to bed. I had been in my

room for a quarter of an hour when the door opened and my mistress came in, not in *négligée*, but dressed as she had been all the evening. It was an evil augury.

'Tell me,' she said shortly, 'if I am to agree to this marriage?'

'Do you like him?'

'I don't dislike him.'

'Then agree.'

'Very well and good-bye. From this moment love between us ceases and friendship begins. Adieu.'

'Let our friendship date from to-morrow.'

'No, not if I die for it! If I am to be the bride of another, I will be worthy of him. I might even be happy in the days to come, who knows? Don't keep me, let me go—you know I love you.'

'Kiss me, then.'

'No.'

'But you are crying?'

'No. In God's name let me go.'

'You will only go and cry in your own room. I am in despair. Stay, and I will be your husband.'

'No, I can't consent to that—now.'

She made an immense effort and tore herself away. I could not sleep for remorse and shame.

I stayed to dinner next day, but I pretended, as I often did, to have toothache when I wished to be let alone. She never spoke to me, she never looked at me, and I know now she was right.

It was a very long dinner, and after it was over Mlle. de la Meure announced her marriage, in eight days, and her departure for Dunkirk.

I don't know why I did not fall down dead, but I went back to Paris and wrote her a passionate love-letter. She begged me, in her answer, not to write to her any more. Then I thought she must have fallen in love with the merchant, and longed to kill him. I thought I would go and see him at his lodgings, tell him of my relations with his *fiancée*,

and if this did not put him off, propose a duel. I went, with two pistols, but he was asleep, and I waited for a quarter of an hour, at the end of which he entered in a dressing-gown, and flung his arms round my neck. I was overwhelmed. Coffee was brought, and still not an offensive word could I find to say. The fit was past. It is humiliating to think that chance alone had prevented my behaving like a scoundrel.

A short time later I went to Geneva, and alighted at the Hotel des Balances. It was the 20th of August 1760. I happened to go idly up to a window in the inn, and my eyes fell on a pane of glass on which some one had scrawled with a diamond, '*Thou too wilt forget Henriette.*'

My hair stood on end, as the recollection of the day when Henriette wrote those words, thirteen years before, flashed into my mind. We had lodged in that very room when she left me to return to France. A thousand memories crowded on me. Sweet, noble, true Henriette, whom I had loved so dearly, where was she now? I had never heard of her. I had never tried to hear of her. Comparing myself as I was at the moment of reading these words with the old self who had written them, I was forced to admit that I had been more nearly worthy of her in the past than I was now. I could still love passionately, but some of the delicacy and power of idealisation, which alone justifies the excesses of passion, had passed from me. But it seemed to me as though the memory of Henriette gave me back something of all these; and had I known where to look for her, I should have started then and there in quest of her, in spite of the strict prohibition she had imposed on me.

After dinner that night I went with M. Villars-Chandieu to Voltaire's house. He was just rising from the table as we arrived, surrounded by a little court of lords and ladies, and I was formally presented.

CHAPTER XV

VOLTAIRE

'M. DE VOLTAIRE,' said I, 'this is the proudest day of my life. I have been your pupil for twenty years, and my heart rejoices to see my master.'

'Sir, honour me in the same way for another twenty years, and at the end of that time bring me my fees.'

'Most willingly, if you will promise to wait for me.'

This Voltairean sally raised a laugh, but I was not put out of countenance. I expected some such speech, and I was on the look out for my revenge.

Some one then presented to him his recently arrived Englishmen.

'English, are they?' said Voltaire; 'I wish I was.'

I thought the compliment mistaken, for the Englishmen must needs express the wish that they were French; and it is allowable surely for a man to put his own nation first when it comes to choosing.

Voltaire spoke to me again, saying that as I was Venetian, I must know Count Algarotti.

'I knew him in Padua seven years ago, and what most attracted me in him was his professed admiration of M. de Voltaire.'

'You flatter me; but surely his claim to general esteem does not rest on the fact of his admiring any particular person?'

'That is how he made his name. He constituted himself an admirer of Newton, and made it possible for ladies to talk learnedly about light. He has not succeeded as completely as de Fontenelle in his *Plurality of Worlds*, still he has succeeded.'

'Do the Italians approve his style?'

'No, for it is full of Gallicisms.'

'But do not these French expressions embellish your language?'

'They spoil it; just as French, interlarded with Italian or German, even though M. de Voltaire himself wrote it, would be horrible.'

'You are right. The integrity of a language must be maintained. May I ask to what branch of literature you devote yourself?'

'To none; but I read enormously, and I travel to improve my knowledge of human nature.'

'That is one way of learning it; but the book is unwieldy. You would do it more easily by reading history.'

'Yes, if history did not lie. Besides, history bores one, while the world as it goes is more interesting. Horace, whom I know by heart, is my guide.'

'You are fond of poetry?'

'I am devoted to it.'

'Have you written many sonnets?'

'A dozen which I value, and two or three thousand, perhaps, which I have forgotten.'

'The Italians have a mania for the sonnet form; and yet its prescribed limits and length make it a veritable Procrustean bed; you have few good ones, and as for us we have none, but that is the fault of our language.'

'And also of the French genius, which imagines that an expanded thought necessarily loses force and brilliancy.'

'You are not of that opinion?'

'Pardon me; it is only necessary to carefully select the thought to be expressed. A *bon mot*, for instance, is not matter for a sonnet; it is only good for an epigram.'

'Who is your favourite Italian poet?'

'Ariosto; but I cannot say I love him *more* than the others, for he is the *only* one I love. All pale before Ariosto. When I read what you said of him fifteen years ago, I

predicted that you would retract it all when you had read him.'

'I have read him, but when I was young, and knew your language only superficially. I was prejudiced by Italian *savants* who adored Tasso, and I unfortunately published a criticism which I thought was mine, but which was only an echo. Now I love your Ariosto.'

'O M. de Voltaire, I breathe again! But for pity's sake have the book excommunicated in which you turn that great man to ridicule.'

'Useless, for my books are all excommunicated. But I will give you a proof of my recantation.'

He then recited from memory two long extracts from the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth cantos, without missing a line; and I cried out, when he had finished, that all Italy should hear of this! Greedy of praise, he next day gave me the translation he had made of the stanza beginning—

'Quindi avvien che tra principi e signori.'

Madame Denis, Voltaire's niece, asked me if I thought her uncle had chosen some of the poet's finest lines.

'Yes, madame, but not *the* finest.'

'You think, then,' said Voltaire, 'that it was his more human lines which won for him the title *Divine?*'

'Yes, certainly.'

'And which are those lines which you consider the best of all?'

'The thirty-six last stanzas of the twenty-third song, in which he describes how Roland went mad. Since the beginning of time, no one has described the symptoms more accurately.'

'Perhaps M. Casanova would recite them to us,' said Madame Denis.

When I had finished, tears were in all eyes; every one was sobbing. M. de Voltaire and Madame Denis fell on my neck.

'It is odd,' said Madame Denis, 'that Rome has not put the song of Roland on the Index!'

'Rome was so far from condemning it,' said Voltaire, 'that Leo the Tenth excommunicated beforehand any one who should dare to censure it. The two great families of d'Este and Médicis upheld Ariosto. Without their protection it is more than likely he would have been interdicted.'

Then some one spoke of *L'Écossaise*. Voltaire said that if I would play in it at his house, he would himself play the part of Montrose. I began to excuse myself, but he would not hear of my leaving next day.

'Did you come to talk to me, or to hear me talk?'

'To talk to you, certainly; but, above all, to have you talk to me.'

'Then stay at least three days longer. Come and dine with me every day, and we will have long discussions.'

I could not refuse, and, wishing the company good night, I withdrew.

Next morning young Fox came to see me, with the two Englishmen I had seen the preceding evening. We played cards, and I lost fifty louis; after this we went round the town in a band, and dined together with Voltaire, where we saw the Duc de Villars, who had just come for the sake of consulting Dr. Tronchin, who for the last ten years had been keeping him alive by artificial means. Voltaire tried to draw me out on the subject of the Venetian government, but seeing that the subject was distasteful to me, he took my arm and led me into his garden. The river ran at the end of the main walk.

'That is the Rhone,' said he, facetiously; 'the Rhone, which I am sending as a present to France!'

By and by the Duc de Villars and the famous Dr. Tronchin joined us. The doctor was polished, eloquent, and a learned man, a pupil of Boerhaave, whose memory he cherished. He had neither the jargon, the charlatanism, nor the self-sufficiency generally characteristic of the faculty. His theory of medicine was based on diet, and to order a strict

regimen in those days evidenced some strength of mind. I was assured, though I could hardly believe it, that he had cured a consumptive patient with the milk of an ass, having previously subjected the animal to thirty potent frictions of mercury, administered by four strong porters!

As for Villars, he was the exact opposite of Tronchin; in face and figure he looked like a woman dressed up as a man, and a seventy-year-old woman at that. He was thin and withered, his cheeks were plastered with paint, his lips covered with carmine, his eyebrows painted, his teeth were made of ivory, and his head was covered with an enormous wig strongly scented with *ambre;* in his button-hole he wore an immense bunch of flowers, which reached to his chin. He affected slow and graceful gestures, and spoke in so low a voice one could not always hear what he said. He was very polite and very affable, and affected in manners, as the mode was under the Regency. He was governor of Provence, and his back was eaten away by cancer. He would have been dead and buried many a long year, in the strict order of nature, but Tronchin kept him alive by feeding his sores with slices of veal. Without this nourishment the cancer would have perished, and he would have died with it. This may be called an artificial existence!

I accompanied M. de Voltaire to his bedroom, where he changed his wig and put on another cap; he was never seen without a cap, for he was very subject to colds. I saw on his table the *Summa* of Saint Thomas and the *Secchia Rapita* of Tassoni. He opened a cupboard, and I saw about a hundred great sheaves of papers.

'There are nearly fifty thousand letters there,' said he, 'all of which I have answered.'

'Have you kept a copy of your replies?'

'It is my valet's duty to copy them.'

'I know several booksellers who would give a good deal for these treasures.'

'Yes; but beware of booksellers when you want to publish

anything, especially if you are not known; they are more dangerous than the pirates of Morocco!'

'I shall have nothing to do with these gentlemen until I am old.'

'Then they will be the scourge of your old age!'

We then returned to the salon, where for two hours Voltaire displayed all the resources of his brilliant and fertile mind, delighting his audience, in spite of his caustic humour, which spared no one. Yet accompanied by his peculiarly sweet smile, his sallies lost their bitterness.

His household was maintained on a generous footing, and his table was liberally spread, which is more than one can say of poets in general. He was sixty-six years old, and had a hundred and twenty thousand francs a year. It was wrongly said that he enriched himself by cheating his publishers; on the contrary, they cheated him, with the exception of the Cramers, whose fortune he made. He cared more for fame than anything else, and would often give away his works, on condition they should be printed and circulated. During the few days I was with him I witnessed one of those acts of generosity; he made a present of *La Princesse de Babylone*, a charming story which he wrote in three days.

I dined at *Les Délices*, but Voltaire was absent. Madame Denis, however, more than made up for his absence. She had plenty of taste, tact, and intelligence, and hated the King of Prussia, whom she called a villain.

M. de Voltaire appeared about five o'clock with a letter in his hand.

'Do you know the Marquis Albergati Capacelli and the Count Paradisi?' he asked.

'I know Albergati by reputation; he is one of the forty at Bologna, where the forty are fifty!'

'Mercy, what an enigma; well, he has sent me Goldoni's plays, some Bologna sausages, the translation of my *Tancrède*, and he says he is coming to see me!'

'He won't come, he is not so foolish.'

'Foolish! what do you mean? Is it foolish to come to see *me?*'

'He knows he would be risking too much; but if he came you would see what a fool *he* is, and an illusion concerning him would be at an end.'

'And Goldoni?'

'Goldoni is the Italian Molière.'

'Why does he call himself the poet of the Duke of Parma?'

'Probably to prove that he has his weak side as well as any other man. He also calls himself a barrister, though he is none; he is the author of some good comedies, and that is all. He does not shine in society.'

'I have been told that he is poor, and would leave Venice, but that he fears to displease the managers of the theatres where his plays are acted.'

'There was some talk of giving him a pension, but the project fell through; they were afraid the moment his living was secured he would leave off writing.'

'Cumes refused to give Homer a pension, for fear that all blind men would ask one!'

We passed the day together. He thanked me effusively for the *Macaronicon* I had sent him, and presented me to a Jesuit named Adam, whispering to me, 'Not Adam, the first man!'

I was told that they played backgammon together, and when Voltaire lost he would throw dice and dice-box at the Jesuit's head. If all the members of that order were treated with as little consideration we should fairly neutralise them, but no such luck!

The next day I looked forward to spending happily with Voltaire, but I was disappointed, for the great man was in the vilest of tempers, bitter, caustic, and quarrelsome, though he knew that it was my last day. He thanked me ironically for my present of Merlin Cocci's book. 'You meant well, I am sure,' he said, 'but I can't thank you, for I have wasted four hours over it.'

I mastered myself sufficiently to reply calmly that perhaps he would come round to my way of thinking some day, and in support of this remark I quoted several examples of erroneous first impressions.

'All this is very true,' he answered, 'but as for your Merlin, I give him up. I put him on a par with the *Pucelle* of Chapelain.'

'Which every one admires, in spite of its faulty versification. Chapelain was a poet, though he wrote bad verse. I appreciate his genius.'

My frankness evidently vexed him. As for *La Pucelle* I knew that there was a disgusting poem of the same name in circulation, attributed to Voltaire, but that he disowned it. I thought that for this reason he would discontinue the argument, but on the contrary he became more emphatic, and I kept pace with him.

'Chapelain,' I said, 'at any rate presented his subject agreeably, without shocking the modesty or the piety of his readers, and on this point my master, Crébillon, agrees with me.'

'Crébillon! much he knew about it! And by what right, may I ask, do you call him *master?*'

'He taught me French, in less than two years, and as a mark of gratitude I translated his *Rhadamiste* into Italian alexandrines. I am the first Italian who has dared to use that metre.'

'The first! I beg your pardon, that honour belongs to my friend, Pierre Jacques Martelli.'

'I am sorry to have to contradict you.'

'But I possess his works, printed at Bologna.'

'But not in alexandrines; his verses have all fourteen feet, and the alternative masculine and feminine rhyme is not observed. Nevertheless, I must own that he thought he was writing in alexandrines, and his preface made me split with laughter. Perhaps you have not read it?'

'Not read it, sir! I have a mania for prefaces; I never miss one, and Martelli proves that his verses produce on

Italian ears the effect which alexandrines produce on ours.'

'That is the laughable part of it; your masculine verses have twelve feet, and the feminine ones thirteen. All Martelli's lines have fourteen feet. He must have been deaf, or had a very bad ear.'

'You follow our theory of versification uncompromisingly?'

'Yes, in spite of all difficulties.'

'And what is the effect of your innovation?'

'It has not been a success, for no one knows how to recite my verses; but I hope to recite them myself, before our literary coteries.'

'Do you remember any of your *Rhadamiste?* I should be glad to hear it!'

I recited the scene which ten years before I had recited to Crébillon. Voltaire listened with pleasure, and when I had finished he repeated some pages from his *Tancrède*, which he had not yet published, and which was rightly considered a masterpiece.

Had we stopped there everything would have been well, but we fell to discussing Horace. He said Horace was a great writer, and had laid down precepts which would never grow old. On which I answered that he himself had violated one of these precepts, though in a masterly way.

'Which one, if you please?'

'You do not write *contentus paucis lectoribus.*'

'No, but if Horace had had to fight the hydra of superstition, as I have, he also would have written for the whole world—not for a mere section of it.'

'You might, I think, spare yourself the trouble of combating what you will never succeed in destroying.'

'The work I cannot finish; others will. I shall have the credit of being the first.'

'Very good, and now suppose you do succeed in destroying superstition, with what will you replace it?'

'I like that! When I have delivered humanity from a

ferocious monster that devours it, what shall I put in that monster's place, say you?'

'Superstition does not devour humanity; it is, on the contrary, necessary to its existence.'

'Necessary to its existence! That is a horrible piece of blasphemy which the future will avenge. I love mankind; I would like to see it, as I am, free and happy. Superstition and liberty cannot go hand in hand. Do you think that slavery makes for happiness?'

'What you want then is the supremacy of the people?'

'God forbid! The masses must have a king to govern them.'

'In that case then superstition is necessary, for the people would never give a mere man the right to rule them.'

'Don't speak of kings; the name implies despotism, which I hate as I hate slavery.'

'What would you have, then? If you admit one man as ruler, that man must be king.'

'I want a sovereign ruling a free people, and bound to them by reciprocal conditions, which should prevent any inclination to despotism on his part.'

'Addison says that such a sovereign, such a chief, is impossible. I agree with Hobbes, between two evils one must choose the lesser. A nation freed from superstition would be a nation of philosophers, and philosophers do not know how to obey. There is no happiness for a people that is not crushed, kept down and held in leash.'

'Horrible! And you are of the people! If you had read me you would see that I prove Superstition to be the arch-enemy of kings.'

'If I have read you! I have read you and re-read you, especially those parts where I differ from you. Your master passion is love of humanity. This love blinds you. Love humanity, but love it as it is. Humanity is not susceptible to the benefits you wish to shower on it; they would only tend to make it more wretched and more perverse. Do not seek to destroy the beast which you say devours it; it loves the

beast. Do you not remember how Don Quixote had to defend himself against the galley-slaves when he tried to set them free?'

'I am sorry you have such a bad opinion of your fellow-creatures. By the way, do you consider that you enjoy liberty in Venice?'

'Such freedom as can be enjoyed under an aristocratic government. We are not as free as the English, but we are satisfied.'

'Even when they put you in "The Leads"?'

'My imprisonment was an act of despotism, I own, but I know, too, that I abused my liberty. I sometimes think the government was right in shutting me up without the usual formalities of a trial.'

'Nevertheless you escaped!'

'I was within my rights, as the government was within its rights.'

'Admirable! but according to that no one in Venice can be free.'

'Perhaps not, but to consider oneself free is to be free.'

'There I cannot agree with you: we look at liberty from a different standpoint. The aristocracy, even members of the government, are not free in your country. For instance, they cannot even travel without permission.'

'True, but it is by virtue of a law they have imposed upon themselves. Would you say that an inhabitant of Berne is not free because of the sumptuary laws, when he is actually his own legislator?'

'Well, let the people everywhere have the privilege of making their own laws.'

We spoke no more of literature, and I remained silent until after Voltaire had retired, when I then left, thinking, fool that I was, that I had reduced this intellectual athlete to reason. But I cherished an enduring spite against him, and for ten years criticised everything he wrote. I am sorry for it to-day, though on re-reading my censures I think I was right on many points. I ought to have held my tongue.

I ought to have reflected that but for his satirical habit, which made me hate him, I should have considered him sublime.

I spent part of that night and part of the following day writing down my conversations with Voltaire. I had matter enough to make a volume, and only give a small fragment here. The next day I left for the south.

CHAPTER XVI

INTERVIEWS WITH THE POPE

I VISITED Avignon, Marseilles, Nice, and stopped some time at Genoa. Thence I went to Pisa, where I made the acquaintance of an Englishman, who sold me his travelling carriage, and introduced me to Corilla, the celebrated poetess. She was good enough to improvise for me on several subjects which I suggested. She charmed me, not so much by her grace and beauty, as by the pretty things she said in the prettiest way.

I lodged in Florence at the Carrajo, in an apartment overlooking the Arno. I bought a carriage, and hired a footman and a coachman, whom I put in Signor de Bragadin's livery, red and blue.

Then I cashed a letter of credit, made a toilette, and went to the opera, where I took a stall so as to examine the actresses at my ease. Imagine my surprise when, in the leading singer, I recognised Teresa! Teresa, whom I had known and loved in 1744, when she was travelling disguised as a boy with her pretended mother and brothers, and whom I should certainly have married, had I not been arrested at Pesaro.

I had not seen her for seventeen years, and I had not answered her last letter; but she was as beautiful as ever. Presently, at the end of a song, she looked at me, and never took her eyes off me again. As she left the stage she made a sign to me with her fan. I left my seat, my heart beating wildly; at the back of the stage I saw my Teresa standing, on the top of a small staircase, telling a porter to let me pass. We faced each other silently for a moment. At last I took her hand and laid it on my heart.

'See!' I said. 'Feel what I feel!'

She answered: 'When I first saw you I thought I should faint. Unfortunately I am engaged to supper to-night, but I shall not be able to sleep for thinking of you afterwards. Come and see me to-morrow morning at eight o'clock. Where do you live? what name do you go under? how long have you been here? how long are you going to stay? are you married? O cursed supper! Go—go, my friend, they are calling me. Farewell, till to-morrow.'

When I returned to my place I remembered she had told me neither her name nor her address. A well-dressed young man was sitting next to me, and I asked him if he could tell who the actress was who was playing *Mandane*.

'You have not been in Florence long, sir,' he answered.

'I have only just arrived.'

'Then your ignorance is excusable. Well, sir, her name is the same as mine, for she is my wife, and I am Cirillo Palesi, at your service.'

I bowed. I did not like to ask where he lived, for fear he should think me impertinent. Teresa married to this handsome young man! And I had addressed myself to him of all people in the world! On leaving the opera I questioned one of the servants, and learned from him that she had only been married ten months, and that her husband had neither fortune nor profession; 'but,' he added, 'she is rich enough for both, rich and most perfectly respectable, so there is nothing to be done there!'

At break of day I was at the door of the first woman I had ever loved. An old servant came and asked if I was M. Casanova. Madame had told her she expected me.

Presently the young husband appeared in a dressing-gown and night-cap, and politely announced that his wife would be down in a moment; then looking at me fixedly, he said—

'But surely it was you who asked me my wife's name yesterday evening.'

'Quite so, sir; I had not seen her for many years, and

did not know she was married. By good luck I addressed myself to her husband. The friendship I feel for her I shall be glad to extend to you, if you will allow me.'

Then in came Teresa. We fell into each other's arms, like two lovers who had been long parted. She told her husband to sit down, and drawing me on to the sofa, cried freely; so did I. When we were calmer, our eyes fell on the poor husband, whom we had forgotten, and who was the picture of comic astonishment. We both burst out laughing, and Teresa, who knew how to manage this puppet, said—

'My dear Palesi, you see before you the man who was a father, and more than a father to me. To this generous friend I owe everything. O happy hour, for which I have longed for ten years!'

At the name of father, his eyes grew rounder; for Teresa, though perfectly well preserved, was only two years younger than I.

'Yes, sir,' said I, 'your Teresa is my daughter, my sister, my cherished friend. She is an angel, a treasure, and your wife.' Then addressing myself to her: 'I did not answer your last letter because——'

'I know. You were shut up in "The Leads." I heard in Vienna of your marvellous escape. I heard of you in Paris and Holland. It is only lately that I have lost trace of you. When I tell you everything that has happened to me in the last ten years, you will be amused. However, I am happy now. This is my dear Palesi, a Roman, whom I married a short time ago. We love each other dearly, and I hope you will be his friend as you are mine.'

At these words I embraced Palesi. He was awkward, for he did not know what to make of this man who had been father, brother, friend, and perhaps lover of his wife, all in one.

He recovered himself sufficiently to ask me if I would take a cup of chocolate with them, and when I accepted, he left the room to prepare it himself.

As soon as we were alone, she flung herself into my arms.

'O my dear love, you who made my heart beat for the first time, hold me, hold me to your heart! To-morrow we will be brother and sister, but for to-day let us be lovers only. You must know that I am still in love with my husband, and never mean to deceive him. But I must acquit the debt I owed to you, my first love. Then we will forget everything, except that I am married, and that we are fast friends. You look sad?'

'I find you bound, while I am free. I have come too late. But your will shall be law to me. Only tell me what you wish me to do. I must not speak of the past before your husband, I suppose?'

'No, he knows nothing of my affairs, beyond what every one knows, that I made my fortune at Naples, where I am supposed to have gone at the age of ten years. It is an innocent deception which does no one any harm. I tell people I am twenty-four; do I look much older?'

'Not a bit, though I know you are thirty-two.'

'You mean thirty-one, for I was fourteen when I knew you.'

'I seem to think you were fifteen.'

'Well, so be it, between ourselves; but tell me, I beg you, can I pass for twenty-four?'

'You look even younger than that.'

'Now tell me, my dear Casanova, do you want money? I am in a position to return you what you gave me, and with interest. Everything I have is settled on me. I have fifty thousand ducats at Naples, and an equal sum in diamonds. Tell me quickly, for the chocolate will be here in a minute.'

I was about to fling myself again into her arms, when the chocolate came. Her husband appeared, followed by a maid, bearing three cups on a silver-gilt tray.

While we were drinking it, Palesi descanted, wittily enough, on his surprise when he recognised the man who had made him get up so early as the same person who had

accosted him at the theatre the night before, and asked him his wife's name. He was too well bred to ask questions as to how, when, and where I had known his wife.

Palesi was only about twenty-three years old. He was fair-haired: much too pretty for a man. He was so gay and entertaining I could not dislike him, even had I desired to do so.

At ten o'clock all the other actors and actresses came in for rehearsal. Teresa received them graciously, and I could see she enjoyed great consideration among them. Two of the actresses remained to dinner, one named Redegonde, and a *figurante* called Corticelli, who was very pretty; but I was too full of Teresa to pay much attention to either.

After dinner, a little stout abbé, a veritable Tartufe, came in, bowed to Teresa in the Portuguese fashion, and sat down by her. It was the Abbé Gama, whom I had known at Rome. He recognised me and embraced me. He gave me news of old friends, and I was listening with interest, when an unexpected apparition absorbed all my attention. A boy of fifteen or sixteen entered the room, and after saluting the company, kissed Teresa. I was the only one who did not know him, but I was not the only one who looked surprised. Teresa intrepidly presented him to me, saying—

'This is my brother.'

This brother of hers was my living image, if anything a little fairer than I. I knew at once who he was. Nature could not have been more indiscreet.

It seemed to me she might have arranged our meeting without so many witnesses. I tried to catch her eye, but she avoided my glance. The boy was staring at me so hard, he could not listen to what she was saying. People's glances wandered from my face to his. Anybody with eyes in their head must be aware of the youth's parentage.

He spoke the Neapolitan dialect perfectly, but he also spoke Italian, and talked well. His manners were excellent. His mother said that music was his passion.

'You shall hear him on the harpsichord,' she said, 'for though he is eight years younger than I am, he plays far better.'

Women are much cleverer than we are at wriggling out of difficult places.

When we were alone, I congratulated Teresa on her good-looking brother.

'He is yours, and the joy of my life. The Duke of Castropignano brought him up. It was he, if you remember, who took me away from Rimini. When the child was born he was sent to Sorrento, where the duke had him baptized by the name of Cæsar Philip Lanti. He stayed at Sorrento till he was nine. He has always looked upon me as his sister, but I used to hope that we should meet again, you and I, and that then you would not refuse to acknowledge him, and marry his mother.'

'And now you have put it out of my power to do so.'

'Alas, yes! fate has ordered it otherwise. When the duke died I left Naples, well off, as you know. Your son possesses a capital of twenty thousand ducats, and if I have no children by Palesi, he will inherit all I have.'

She led me into her bedroom, and opening a coffer showed me some diamonds, and other jewels of value, besides a quantity of fine silver plate.

'Give Césarino to me,' said I. 'I will show him the world.'

'Ah no! Ask me for everything else, but leave me my son. Do you know, I never kiss him for fear I may forget and betray myself. What do you think people will say in Venice when they see Casanova rejuvenated by twenty years?'

'Are you going to take him to Venice for the *Ascenza*?'

'Yes; and you, where are you going?'

'To Rome, and to Naples, to see the Duke of Mantalonia.'

That day was among the happiest of my life, and God knows I have had many happy ones. Césarino won my

heart. He was mischievous, lively, charming, as only a Neapolitan can be. He sat down to the harpsichord, and sang Neapolitan songs which made us die with laughing. Teresa had only eyes for him and for me, but from time to time she caressed her husband, saying—

'There is no happiness except in the company of those one loves best.'

I invited all my friends in Florence to dine with me, and had ordered a sumptuous dinner at my inn. La Corticelli, the pretty *figurante* I have already mentioned, accompanied by her mother and brother, were the first to arrive. The old woman told me that she never allowed her daughter to dine with strangers unless her brother and she were included in the invitation.

'You can take her away then at once,' said I, 'or you can accept this ducat, and go and dine with your son wherever you choose, for I don't want either him or you.'

She took the ducat and went away, saying suavely that she was sure she was leaving her daughter in good hands.

The daughter made such amusing comments on her mother's behaviour directly her back was turned, that I took to her then and there. She was only thirteen, and so slight that she did not look more than ten. She was well made, lively, quick, and extraordinarily fair for an Italian.

Another of my guests was the actress Redegonde, from Parma. She was really the sister of my footman, and it was comical to see the gravity with which the tall fellow stood behind his sister's chair.

I called for Abbé Gama, and we went together to Marshal Botta's to dine. Here I met the English resident, the Chevalier Mann, the idol of Florence. He was very rich, and, though English, very amiable, intelligent, and a lover of the arts. I paid him a visit at his house, and saw his beautiful gardens, furniture, pictures, and choice books.

About this time a Russian named Iwanoff wrote to me from Pistoia asking me to cash a draft for him in Florence, which city, for certain reasons, he was afraid to visit. He

had no money, he said, and could not leave his hotel till he had paid. Scenting trouble, I took a post-chaise and drove out to Pistoia. I advised him to give the bill to his landlord to take to Florence and change at the banker's, Signor Sasso-Sassi.

Imagine my surprise on receiving a visit from the banker a few days later. The bill, it seems, was false. The landlord had been obliged to reimburse the money; he declared he never would have had anything to do with it but for me, and that I must refund him two hundred crowns.

Naturally I refused. The following day I was summoned by the head of the police to appear before him. He was exceedingly polite, but decreed that I must pay the two hundred crowns, as the landlord had agreed to cash it on my recommendation.

The upshot of this was, that I was to leave Florence in three days, and Tuscany in six. I could appeal to the Grand Duke, and if he pronounced in my favour, should be allowed to return, but not otherwise.

I wrote on a piece of paper:—

'I bow to your iniquitous decision, but the matter will not end here.'

I said good-bye to Teresa with a heartiness that must have given her poor husband a headache, and left the next day, and in thirty-six hours was in Rome.

Among my letters of introduction was one for Cardinal Passionei. When I presented it, his eminence expressed a wish to hear, from my own lips, the story of my escape from prison.

'The story is a long one, monseigneur,' I answered, as usual.

'So much the better. I am told you are an excellent *raconteur*.'

'But must I sit on the floor while I tell it, monseigneur?'

'Certainly not, your clothes are too good.'

One of his servants brought me a stool without arms or

a back. This put me so out of temper that I told my story quickly and badly, in a little quarter of an hour.

'You write better than you speak,' was the cardinal's comment.

'I can only speak well when I am comfortable.'

'And are you not comfortable here?'

'No, monseigneur; no man, and above all, no learned man, could put me out of countenance, but your stool——!'

'You like your ease?'

'Indeed I do!'

'Look, here is my funeral speech on Prince Eugène; I make you a present of it. I hope you will not find my Latin faulty. The Holy Father will give you an audience to-morrow at ten o'clock.'

This was, of course, equivalent to a dismissal.

I determined to make him, the cardinal, a handsome present. I possessed a copy of the *Pandectarum liber unicus*, which had been given me at Berne, and which I did not know what to do with. It was in folio, in perfect condition, beautifully printed and bound. The cardinal would value the book, as he was a collector. This was a fair exchange for his funeral oration, and I hoped that the next time he would give me something better than a stool to sit upon.

I had known his Holiness the Pope while he was only Bishop of Padua, and after having kissed the sacred cross on his sacred slipper, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and reminded me that I used to always leave his assemblies as soon as he began to say the Rosary.

'Most Holy Father, I have far worse sins than that to reproach myself with, and that is why I have come to prostrate myself at your feet and beg for absolution.'

He gave me his blessing, and asked what he could do for me in Rome.

'Intercede for me that I may return to Venice in safety.'

'We will speak to the ambassador, and let you know what he says. Do you often go to see Cardinal Passionei?'

'I have been to him three times. He gave me his funeral

oration on Prince Eugène, and I sent him the *Pandectes* as a mark of my gratitude.'

'He will send Winckelmann to offer you a price for it.'

'That would be treating me as a bookseller. I won't have it.'

'Then he will return you the volume. We know his ways.'

'If his eminence returns me the volume, I shall return him his oration.'

At this his Holiness began to laugh, and hold his sides.

'We should like to know the end of this, without others being informed of our innocent curiosity.'

After he had said this, an elaborate blessing, full of unction, gave me to understand that the audience was over.

As I left the palace I was accosted by an old abbé, who asked if I were not Signor Casanova, who had escaped from 'The Leads.' I replied that I was he.

'Heaven be praised,' said he, 'that I see you in good health.'

'To whom have I the honour of speaking?'

'Don't you know me? I am Momolo, the Venetian boatman, and many a time have I taken you in my gondola.'

'You have become a priest since then?'

'Not at all, but the cassock is everybody's uniform here. I am principal *scopatore* (sweeper) of our Holy Father the Pope.'

'I congratulate you, but you must not mind my laughing.'

'Laugh away. My wife and daughter laugh each time they see me in my habit and cape. Come and see us; here is our address, behind the Trinità dei Monti.'

The Abbé Winckelmann called on me, told me I had entirely won the good graces of the cardinal by my present, for the book was a rare one, and in better condition than the copy in the Vatican library, adding—

'The cardinal wishes me to ask what he owes you for it.'

'Nothing; I am not a bookseller. The volume was given to me, and I can only part with it on the same terms.'

'He will return it.'

'He is at liberty to do so if he chooses, but if he does I shall return his oration. I will accept nothing from a person who refuses a present from me.'

The next day, back came my book. I immediately sent the cardinal his sermon, with a note, saying I had found it a masterpiece, though I had only had time to glance through it.

In the evening I went with my brother John to see Momolo, the *scopatore santissimo*. He had an elderly wife, four daughters, the eldest of whom was twenty-four, and two sons, all desperately ugly. Though the poor man was only paid two hundred Roman crowns a year, he insisted on our staying to supper.

'On condition,' said I, 'that you will let me send to my house for six flagons of Orvieto wine.'

I despatched a note to my secretary Costa, and he by and by appeared with the wine and a glazed ham.

I saw the girls admired Costa, so I asked if he might make one of the party. Costa went into the kitchen and helped mother Momolo to fry the polenta.

A large table was covered with a clean cloth, and we sat down to two enormous dishes of polenta, and a huge saucepan full of pork cutlets. We had just begun when some one knocked at the door.

The four girls made a face.

'It is Maria and her mother,' one of them said. 'Who asked them to come, I wonder? They might have stayed at home.'

'They are always poking their noses in,' said another.

'My children,' said the good old father, 'they are hungry, and they shall share what we have.'

Good old Momolo rose from table and opened the door to the two guests. A very pretty girl came in, followed by her mother. Both seemed ashamed of their importunity, and said timidly they would not have taken the liberty of coming had they known there were strangers there.

The good Momolo told them they had done quite right, and placed chairs for them between my brother and myself. I looked at Maria and saw that she was charming.

Every one began to eat; the polenta was excellent, the cutlets delicious, the ham perfect. In less than an hour the table was cleared. We began to talk about the lottery; the girls had all a small share in some number. Mariuccia said if she had anything to risk she would put it on number twenty-seven.

'Here are forty crowns,' said I to Momolo; 'put twenty on twenty-seven in five parts, which I will present to the young ladies, and put twenty on one part, which I will keep for myself.'

I shook hands on leaving with my pretty neighbour, and from that moment I knew what would happen.

My brother told me on the way home that, unless I was as rich as Crœsus, I must be quite mad. I said I was neither one nor the other, but that Mariuccia was lovely, and he agreed.

I supped with the painter Mengs next day. He had a sister living with him, who was violently in love with my brother. She was good and full of talent, but very ugly, so he did not reciprocate. Mengs' wife was pretty, a good mother, and devoted to her husband, though he was anything but amiable. He was obstinate and cruel, and when he dined at home, never left the table sober. Away from home he drank nothing but water. His wife posed for all his nude figures. When I asked her once how she could undertake such hard work, she answered that her confessor had imposed it on her as a duty; 'for,' he said, 'if your husband had another woman as model, who knows what might happen, and the sin would lie at your door.'

The next day I went again to pay my court to the Pope.

'The Venetian ambassador tells me,' he said, 'that you must present yourself to the secretary of the Tribunal if you want to return to your country.'

'Holy Father, I am prepared to do so, if your Holiness

will give me a letter of recommendation. I dare not risk being shut up a second time.'

'You have a very handsome coat on. You did not put it on to say your prayers in.'

'True, Holy Father, nor to go to a ball in either.'

'We have heard the story of your exchange of books with Cardinal Passionei. Own that you pampered your own self-love, somewhat!'

'Yes, and I also humbled a greater arrogance than my own.'

He laughed, and I begged him to allow me to present the *Pandectes* to the Vatican library. A benediction was my only answer, but in papal language this means, 'Rise, this favour is granted you.'

'We will send you,' he said, 'a mark of our particular affection.' Then another benediction told me I was dismissed.

I was curious to know what form the mark of particular affection would take, and fearful lest it should prove to be a blessed rosary, which I should not have known what to do with.

While we were at dinner that day Costa brought in the winning numbers of the lottery; twenty-seven had come out fifth, and a prizewinner.

I went to tell Momolo the good news, but found all the girls looking gloomy, for I had presented my ticket to Mariuccia, and she had consequently won five times as much as they had. They cheered up, however, and we supped again on polenta and pork. On leaving the house I managed to ask Mariuccia if she could not give me a moment's interview. She told me to meet her next morning at eight o'clock outside the Trinità dei Monti.

Mariuccia was tall, as white as a white rose leaf, with blue veins that showed here and there. She had ash-coloured hair and blue eyes. She was only eighteen.

She had told me not to speak to her in the street, so I followed her till she came to an immense building that was

falling to ruin. Up and up she went, till she reached the top of a staircase, which seemed built out into the air; here she sat down and I beside her, and made her a declaration of love.

'Tell me what I can do for you,' said I, 'for I want above all things to make you happy.'

'Take me out of the misery in which I live with my mother, a good woman, but so devout as to make my life a burden to me. She doesn't like me to wash myself, because I have to touch my body with my own hands, and also because cleanliness makes me more pleasing to men. If you had given me the money I won in the lottery as a present, she would have made me refuse it. There is a young man, a hairdresser, who has seen me at Momolo's. He says if I had a dowry of four hundred crowns he would marry me and open a shop. I told him I was poor, that I had only a hundred crowns, which my confessor keeps for me; but now I have two hundred, and you can give me two hundred more. Take the money to my confessor, who is a good man, and will not tell my mother.'

'I will take them to him to-day, but to-morrow you must come and see me and hear how I have prospered. I will tell you this evening where I live.'

I left the hovel of a palace where we were as the clock struck nine. I was shivering with cold, and had only one idea in my head—to take an apartment somewhere where I could receive her without its being known. In a small narrow street, inhabited entirely by poor people, I found a room which was tolerably clean. I paid the woman of the house three months in advance, and gave her money to buy furniture, and, above all, fuel. I ordered her to light a big fire and keep it burning whether I was there or not.

I then went off to the priest. He was a French monk about sixty years old.

'Reverend Father,' said I, 'I met at the house of Momolo the *scopatore santissimo*, a young girl named Maria, whose confessor you are, with whom I fell in love. I offered her

money. She told me that, instead of trying to ruin her, I should do far better if I helped her to marry an honest fellow who would make her happy. I told her I would give her mother two hundred crowns for her. She begged me not to do so, as her mother would believe the money was the price of her sin. She asked me to bring it to you instead. Here it is; will you take charge of it? I shall go to Naples the day after to-morrow, and I hope when I come back I shall find her married.'

The honest priest took the money, telling me he had known Maria for five years.

'She is as innocent and pure as a dove,' he said. 'Her mother is a saint, and as soon as I have made some inquiries about the young man, I will arrange the marriage, and no one shall know of it.'

At eight o'clock next morning I met Maria at the church, and she followed me to my lodgings. She was shy, and confused, and humble. I soon reassured her, and told her that her marriage was a settled thing. She left me, thanked me with all her heart for what I had done for her, and begged me to believe that, though she was poor, and I generous, she nevertheless loved me for my own sake.

While I was at table that day a messenger from the Holy Father was announced. He remitted to me the Cross of the Order of the Golden Spur, with the diploma and patent sealed with the great pontifical seal; therein my quality of doctor of civil law declared me *protonotaire apostolique extra urbem.*

I had nothing to pay for my diploma, whereas Mengs had given twenty-five Roman crowns for his. I hung my cross on a wide crimson ribbon over my shoulder. I was silly and vain enough to buy a cross set with rubies and diamonds, but I never dared to wear this one at Rome. When I went to thank the Pope, I wore the plain cross modestly at my button-hole.

Five years later, when I was in Warsaw, Czartoryski, the Russian prince palatine, asked me why I sported that miser-

able thing. 'It is a rag,' he said, 'which only charlatans wear.'

The Popes know this, yet they continue to give this decoration to ambassadors, who hand it on to their valets.

Momolo's second daughter had fallen in love with my secretary Costa. I told him that, if on my return from Naples I found the marriage arranged, I would defray the expenses of the wedding.

He loved the girl, but he did not marry her then, for he thought I had designs on her; he was a rare fool, though there are plenty like him. He married her the following year, after he had robbed me.

The next day I went off in my fine carriage with the Abbé Alfani, who was willing to act as my secretary, and arrived at Naples to find the whole population in a commotion, for Vesuvius was all but in eruption. At the last station but one the postmaster insisted on reading me his father's will. The good man had died during the outbreak of 1754, and he said that God was reserving a still severer punishment for the wicked city, and that this punishment would fall during the winter of 1761. I calmly went on my way and paid my respects to the Duke of Matalonia, whom I had known in Paris. He came forward to meet me, embraced me, and presented me to his wife. She was a daughter of the Duke of Bovino's. I told him I had come to Naples on purpose to see him. 'Then,' he said, 'you must be my guest'; and before I could reply, 'Go,' said he to a servant, 'fetch Signor Casanova's luggage from the hotel, and if he has a private carriage, put it in the coach-house here.' He added, 'Do you know that I have a son?' The child was sent for, and I duly admired him, saying how like he was to the duke. A monk, who was sitting at the right hand of the duchess, remarked that the boy was not in the least like the duke. He had hardly pronounced the words when the duchess turned quickly round and boxed his ears. The monk received his correction with a good grace. I kept the whole table in a roar with my witticisms, and in half an hour was a

favourite with every one except the duchess, who cut the ground from under my feet whenever she could. She was beautiful but too haughty, and could be deaf, dumb, and blind when she wished. For two days I tried to make her speak, and then gave it up in despair.

Next day the duke took me with him to pay my court to the king. I wore a coat of rose-coloured velvet, embroidered with gold spangles, and the signal honour of kissing a little nine-year-old hand covered with chilblains was mine.

On my return to Rome I sent Costa to inform Momolo that I meant to sup at his house, and that I had ordered a good supper for twelve people. I knew I should meet Mariuccia then, for Momolo had noticed that I delighted in her company.

The carnival was just beginning. I hired a superb landau for the week. This make of carriage is much favoured by the Romans, who love to be drawn up and down the Corso, from eight in the evening till midnight, during the eight days the festival lasts.

Carnival time has been a period of licensed madness for centuries. The races are the oddest part of the entertainment. Barbary horses gallop riderless through the streets to Trajan's column. The carriages are drawn up in close file on each side, and the footways are crowded with masks and sightseers of all classes. As soon as the *barberi* have passed, the carriages circulate slowly, and the masks, afoot or on horseback, press into the middle of the roadway. People pelt each other with real or imitation sweetmeats; pamphlets and lampoons, satirical allusions, fly from mouth to mouth. The greatest licence reigns, for this mob is composed of all that is most exquisite and all that is most abject in Rome. At the stroke of midnight the cannon of the fort of Saint Angelo announces the retreat, and in five minutes not a carriage or a mask is to be seen. The crowd has trooped off to fill the theatres and the opera, to see the rope-dancers and the marionettes. The restaurants and cafés

are not forgotten, for during these eight days all Rome eats, drinks, and rejoices.

Momolo and his family received me with cries of joy, and after I had been with them a few minutes Maria came in, followed by her saintly mother, who told me I must not be surprised to see her daughter so gorgeously dressed, for she was going to be married in three or four days. Of course I congratulated her, and asked who was the happy man.

'A young man who is going to open a hairdresser's shop. Worthy Father Saint-Barnaby arranged the marriage; he has made up Maria's dowry of four hundred crowns from a fund he has at his disposal.'

In the course of the evening I told the girls that Costa would take them to the races the following day in my landau, and that they might choose themselves some dress from the costumier, for which I would pay.

'And what about Maria?' one of them asked.

'Signorina Maria is going to be married. She must not be seen in public without her future spouse.'

The cunning Mariuccia pretended to be vexed at this speech, which her mother loudly applauded.

The next morning at seven o'clock I was at our usual trysting-place. Maria followed me, and we were alone in our little humble room that Love glorified for us. In the course of the interview she told me she was to be married on the following Monday.

'When shall we see each other again, my angel?'

'On Sunday, the eve of my wedding-day. We can be together for a long time,' she said, and went away smiling.

At Momolo's I saw the affianced husband of my pretty Mariuccia. He was talking to Tecla, Momolo's daughter, telling her that she was the one he preferred, only that she had not been able to help him to start the shop, so he thanked Providence that he had come across Maria.

On Sunday at seven I met Maria alone for the last time. Everything was arranged for the wedding, she told me, and

Father Saint-Barnaby had given her twenty piastres for a present.

'I know I shall be happy,' she said; 'my betrothed adores me. But I am glad you did not accept his invitation to the dinner; people would have talked.'

'Tell me,' said I, 'have you confessed everything?'

'Not yet; and besides, I don't think I can have offended God, since I acted throughout from the purest of motives.'

'You are an angel. Promise to christen your first child after me.'

She promised, and we parted swearing everlasting friendship.

Before leaving Rome I went to pay my homage to the Holy Father on Monday evening when all the town was at the races.

He received me most graciously, expressing surprise that I should have absented myself from the carnival at its height. I told him that the greatest pleasure for me, or for any other Christian, was to present my respects to Christ's Vicar on earth. He bowed his head with proud humility, but I could see he was pleased. He kept me an hour, talking of Venice, Padua, and Paris. I gathered that the dear good man would have liked to become personally acquainted with those cities. I renewed my petition for his apostolic protection to enable me to return to my native country.

'My son,' he answered, 'commend yourself to God; His grace will work more than my prayers.'

Then giving me his blessing, he wished me *bon voyage*, and I saw the Head of the Church did not count much on his own powers of intercession.

On Shrove Tuesday I went on the Corso, riding a fine horse, and handsomely disguised as a Punchinello. I had an enormous basket of sweetmeats in front of me, and two sacks of *dragées*, which I showered on all the pretty women. I was invited to sup at Momolo's, and there I was to see Maria for the last time. She came as a bride, and I fancied, but perhaps it was only fancy, that her husband was more

reserved with me than formerly. Maria managed to have a moments' conversation with me alone, and spoke most highly of her husband. He was all that was gentle, loving, and kind, she said, and she meant to make him happy. I drew from my pocket a fine gold watch, which I gave to the hairdresser; then placing on his wife's finger a ring, worth at least six hundred francs, I wished them both health and happiness.

Two days later, a sudden fancy seized me, and I left for Turin.

CHAPTER XVII

AGATHA

THE dancing academy of the celebrated Dupré in Turin was then at the zenith of its reputation. All the dancers, male and female, of the opera were there, the latter accompanied by their mothers. I had not been many days in Turin when I visited the academy, and as I was passing through one of the rooms, became interested particularly in one of the young women. She was tall, with fine delicate features, and was dancing with a man who, when he had occasion to find fault with her, spoke so grossly and harshly, that my blood boiled. I had noticed a woman among the parents whom I instinctively felt must be the mother of the girl I was watching. I was right. She told me she was from Lucca, and was a widow, and poor.

'How is it you are poor, young and beautiful as you are, and with a daughter like that?'

She gave me a significant glance, and at that moment the girl, who was called Agatha, came up and asked her for a handkerchief to wipe her face.

'Allow me to offer you mine, signorita.'

Mine was white, and perfumed with essence of rose; and when she handed it back, I said, 'You cannot return it without having had it washed, my pretty lady.'

She smiled. The ice was broken, and we made acquaintance.

I persuaded Dupré to give a ball at my expense. All the dancers were invited, and only professionals were to be allowed to dance; but tickets were issued at a ducat each, which admitted ladies and gentleman to supper and as onlookers. Agatha had no dress to appear in, so I asked Ma-

dame Dupré to buy her one from me. It was a rich Lyons silk, trimmed with point d'Alençon. The innocent girl, and her equally innocent mother, had no idea of its real value. I had the privilege of assisting at her toilette that day at Dupré's, and I noticed that her earrings were sadly out of keeping with the rest of her things. So drawing a pair of diamond pendants from my pocket, I fastened them in her ears.

'You'd say they were diamonds,' said La Dupré.

So they were, but I said they were paste.

When I got to the ball I found her dancing with Lord Percy, the son of the Duchess of Northumberland, a wild young fellow who was spending immense sums on the most senseless excesses. I had great difficulty in getting Agatha away from him; he wanted her to dance with him all the evening.

We danced minuets and country dances, then the ladies partook of refreshments liberally. The popping corks of champagne bottles made a continuous rumble. It was magnificently done. Madame Chauvelin sat down by Agatha and complimented her on her diamond earrings.

'Not diamonds, only paste,' said the candid Agatha; 'and it was Monsieur here who lent them to me.'

Madame Chauvelin laughed out. 'M. de Seingalt is taking you in, my dear!'

Agatha blushed, for my silence confirmed Madame de Chauvelin's assertion, and every one could tell that I was courting her.

Next day the mother of Agatha came to see me, and took chocolate with me. She wanted to know if the earrings were real or not. I assured her that they were, and that I meant to give them to Agatha. She kissed me, and promised to further my suit with her daughter. Thinking over it all when she had left me, I put her down as the most sensible of all the dancers' mothers I have ever known, and I thought of her almost as tenderly as I did of Agatha.

The pretty Agatha soon earned her earrings. She was so

gentle and so tender, and I was so much in love with her, that if it had not been for the unforeseen event which I am about to relate, I should probably never have parted with her. As it was, I was the agent of Providence in the advancement of her fortune. It will be objected that Providence might have chosen more moral means, but why try to restrict Providence to the narrow circle of prejudice? She has her own methods, which may seem to us obscure, because we are shortsighted.

The young earl was now deeply in love with my mistress. He followed her about wherever she went, behind the scenes at the theatre, at rehearsals. He visited her every day, and did not neglect any of the usual means of seduction. She invariably returned his presents, and kept me informed of all that took place, and we used to laugh over his infatuation together. I was sure of her love, so his efforts rather flattered my vanity than otherwise. Lord Percy himself was at last so convinced of her fidelity that he changed his tactics and attacked her through me.

Frankly and boldly, as is the way of men of his nation, he came one morning and asked me for some breakfast. I received him *à la française*, that is to say, with politeness and cordiality, and put him completely at his ease. Then he told me he loved Agatha, and proposed an arrangement which made me laugh heartily, but did not offend me, because it was so very English.

'I know,' he said, 'that you have been very attentive to Redegonde, the pretty dancer. She is mine. Will you take her in exchange for Agatha, and what do you want over and above?'

'You are as amiable as you are amusing, my dear lord, but you must own it would take a mathematician to work out this sum! How much does Agatha outvalue Redegonde? Redegonde has qualities, no doubt, but she is not to be compared to Agatha!'

'I know that, so I ask you to name your own surplus.'

Lord Percy was immensely rich. I might have asked

twenty-five thousand guineas, and I am sure he would have given them; but I did not care for Redegonde, so I would have none of his bartering. I have never regretted my conduct in this affair. To-day even, when a hundred thousand francs seems a treasure to me, I congratulate myself on my delicacy.

I put the question by. I told him I had great sympathy for him, and that the exchange might therefore come about naturally in the course of time, but that the principal factors would have to be consulted.

'As for Redegonde,' he said, 'I am sure she would consent.'

'I am not so sure of Agatha.'

'That is my business. What I want to know is, does my project please you, and how much do you want to balance things; for, as I said before, your Agatha is worth more than my Redegonde.'

I was amused at it all; but though I was for the present devoted to Agatha, I knew myself, and I resolved to act for the best as regarded her future.

I told Agatha about it that evening when she came to supper, and she laughed heartily.

'Tell me, my dear, would you care for the exchange?'

'I would do as you wished. If his offer is excessively to your advantage, I would advise you to accept.'

I knew she was joking, but I would have preferred a different answer. I became serious, and she pensive.

One evening Agatha told me that the manager of the Alexandria theatre had offered to engage her as second dancer for the carnival.

'He offers me sixty sequins,' said she, 'and I have promised him an answer to-morrow morning. Do you advise me to accept?'

'If you love me, Agatha, you will refuse all engagements for a year. I shall not let you want for anything, and I will get you the best masters, so that you will then be able to command five hundred sequins a year.'

'But sixty sequins is a good price.'

'You can have them without dancing. Tell the manager you are not going to appear on the boards for some time.'

'As you like, but I think I had better put him off by asking an exorbitant sum.'

'Very well; tell him you want five hundred sequins.'

She came to me next day, and in fits of laughter said the manager had not refused what she asked; he had simply said he must think it over. The following afternoon he brought her the contract, according to her conditions, to sign.

I had a suspicion that it was Agatha who was being paid for, and not her talents, and I asked the manager what surety he could give that the salary would be duly paid. He mentioned a well-known banker. I had no more to say, and the contract was written out double and perfectly correct. The mystery was soon explained; Lord Percy was behind the manager.

I might still have been an obstacle in the Englishman's path, but the contract was signed for a year, and now that peace was declared, I wanted to go to England. I decided to give up Agatha, but I made Percy settle a good sum on her. I was curious to see how he would manage to gain her affection, for he was not prepossessing. We supped together every evening, always with Agatha and her mother, and I saw that Lord Percy's constant attentions were producing their effect, so I made up my mind to leave for Milan sooner than I had intended.

'My lord,' said I, 'you know I am deeply attached to Agatha, and that she is happy with me, but I am your friend; and as you adore her, I will do what I can to promote your happiness without any question of exchange or reward. I will leave you in possession of the dear girl, if you will promise me never to abandon her; and if you should have to leave her at any time, for any reason, to give her two thousand guineas.'

'My dear friend,' said he, 'I will give her them at once if you like.'

'No, for I don't want her to know anything of this arrangement.'

'Very well; I will give you a paper in which I will agree to pay her this sum when we part.'

'Unnecessary; your word as an Englishman is sufficient. But as we are none of us masters of the future, promise me that you will take measures to insure this sum to her at your death.'

'I give my word.'

From that moment the Englishman fell more and more deeply in love, and made the handsomest presents to Agatha and her mother, presents which under other circumstances I should not have allowed her to accept. She listened attentively to my advice as to her conduct with her new lover, and it is to these counsels that she largely owed her happiness, for he made her fortune for her. She did not leave the stage, however, for some time.

I was not a man to take gifts from another, but Lord Percy found means to make me a splendid present.

I told him I thought of going to England, and should be glad if he would give me a letter of introduction to the Duchess his mother. He drew a portrait of this lady, surrounded with superb diamonds, from his pocket, and handed it to me, saying—

'There, my dear friend, is the best letter of recommendation I can give you. To-morrow I will write to my mother that you will present it to her in person, unless, indeed, she begs you to keep it.'

'Her Grace, my lord, will see that I aspire to that honour.'

There are some ideas which would never occur except to an Englishman!

I parted from Agatha with tears, but her grief was greater still.

I had met at Count Borromeo's house a certain Count A. B. who conceived a violent liking for me. He dined and

supped with me often, and on several occasions I lent him money. One day, in a burst of confidence, he told me that without my help he must have died of hunger, as he was absolutely destitute of money just then. He was in the service of Spain, his wife was a Spaniard, a Barcelonese, and, according to him, a sparkling brunette of twenty-five or twenty-six years old. He invited me to stay with them at Milan, an invitation I ought to have refused, knowing them to be poor, but I was curious to see this Spanish lady. She wrote the most witty letters, and I pictured her sensible as an Englishwoman, passionate as a Spaniard, gracious and caressing as a Frenchwoman.

But she was quite different from what I had expected. She was pretty, but too small, and too serious. She had written asking me to bring her two pieces of taffetas; and when I told her I had executed her commission, she thanked me, saying her chaplain would reimburse me. We were four at supper; the count was gay, but the little lady maintained an obstinate silence, only answering our remarks with a slight smile. She never raised her eyes from her plate, but found frequent fault with the food, addressing her complaints to the chaplain.

After supper the taffetas was brought in; it was to make her a domino with paniers, according to the extravagant fashion of the day.

When the count accompanied me to my room, he begged me to pardon his wife's Spanish taciturnity, assuring me I should like her extremely when we were better acquainted.

My room was large and comfortable, but the rest of the house was poorly furnished. The servants' livery was worn and shabby, the table linen was patched, the dinner service was in earthenware, and the same girl was lady's-maid and cook. Clairmont, my French valet, whom I had recently engaged, told me he was miserably lodged in a little room leading out of the kitchen. The chaplain was one of those domestic priests so common in Italy, who are boarded and lodged in the house, and who perform in return a hundred

little services. This one said Mass in a neighbouring chapel in the morning, occupied himself with the housekeeping, and was the very humble servant of madame.

He came to me in the morning and asked me to say he had paid me three hundred francs for the taffetas if madame should question me.

'That is strange advice from one of your cloth,' said I. 'Do you advise me to tell a lie? No; I shall tell her the truth.'

'You do not know the lady, sir, and you do not know the ways of the house; however, I will speak to her husband.'

The count was as frightened of his haughty wife as the poor priest was; and to pander to her vanity, he agreed to say that he and I had settled for the silk between us.

I was writing letters in my own room when the husband and wife came up to present to me the friend of the family, Marchese Triulzi, a man of about my own age, tall and well made, with pleasant manners. He said that he had come for the pleasure of meeting me, and also to warm himself by my fire. 'There is only one fireplace in the house,' he said, 'and that is in your room.'

My valet Clairmont had been unpacking my things, and had spread them out on two chairs. As all the chairs were occupied, the marchese drew the stiff little countess to him and made her sit on his knee like a doll. She blushed, and tore herself away.

'Old as you are,' she said, 'have you not learned the respect due to a woman like me?'

'Truly, countess,' he said, 'I do respect you, and so I could not allow you to stand while I sat!'

He then turned to me, and looking at the clothes, asked if I was expecting some lady?

'No,' I said; 'but I hope I shall find some one in Milan worthy of these presents.'

'You had better stay and dine, marchese,' said the count; 'and as you swear by your own cook, send for your dinner.'

The marchese agreed, and the whole meal came from his house—linen and china, wine, valets, and all. This served to explain his footing in the house to me. He did all the talking, and did not spare the countess; but I saw that his raillery was only intended to correct her absurd haughtiness.

After dinner they went off to the opera in his carriage, and the count and I went in mine. The first person I saw there was my dear Teresa Palesi, whom I had left in Florence. I determined to pay her a visit as soon as I could escape from my host.

In the morning Clairmont informed me that a young woman wished to speak to me. A tall well-made girl came in, and offered me her services, to wash and mend my linen and lace. I admired her deeply.

'Where do you live, signorita?'

'In this house, on the ground floor, with my parents.'

'What is your name?'

'Zenobia.'

'Your name is as pretty as you are. Will you let me kiss your hand?'

'No, for my hand is engaged. I am to be married before the end of carnival to a tailor.'

'Is your betrothed handsome and well to do?'

'No; I am just marrying him to have a house of my own.'

'A very good reason, and one which I highly approve. Go and fetch your tailor; I have some work for him.'

I had only just finished my toilette when she returned with her future husband, a little shrivelled-up creature.

'Well, sir, so you are going to marry this charming girl?'

'Yes, my lord; we have already been called in church, and are to be married in ten days.'

'Why not to-morrow?'

'You are in a hurry, illustrissimo.'

'I should be if I was in your place. Now, look at this silk; I want you to make me a domino to wear at the ball

to-morrow, and here are ten sequins on account, on whatever your bill may be.'

He went off joyfully, leaving his sweetheart behind. I spent half an hour chatting with her, gave her my laces to mend, and then drove into Milan to see my dear Teresa, who received me with speechless emotion, for we had never ceased to love each other tenderly, and told me she was no longer living with her husband, who had become impossible. She made him an allowance on condition that he remained in Rome. Cesario, she said, was with her in Milan. She was practically free, and I loved her as dearly as I had done eighteen years ago, but I was now quite incapable of concentrating my affections on any one woman.

The Countess A. B. began to be a little more friendly, and at dinner that evening teased me about my long absence.

'I know where you passed the afternoon,' she said. 'The lady has a lover who will abandon her if you visit her too often.'

'Then I will take his place, madame.'

'You do well to devote yourself to women who appreciate your presents. I know you only bestow them after they have proved their predilection for you.'

'A rule, madame, from which I never deviate, for I find it is a sure means of never being disappointed.'

'Your friend is evidently of your way of thinking; only a mercenary person would put up with a Greppi.'

I did not wince at this name, which was that of my banker; indeed, I was glad that Teresa should have such a wealthy and powerful protector.

We were interrupted by the arrival of Triulzi, who had come to fetch madame to take her to the play. I went with her husband to a gambling-house, where I lost twenty ducats, and then on to the opera, where I lost two hundred more. I could not help laughing at the poor count's distress; he little knew that I had a hundred thousand francs deposited with the very Greppi whom his wife despised so.

The countess, who knew of my losses, asked me if I wanted to sell my sable dress.

'I am told,' she said, 'it is worth a thousand sequins.'

'That may be, madame, but I would rather sell anything else.'

'The Marchese Triulzi would like to buy it to make a present of it.'

'I am sorry I cannot oblige him.'

She said no more, but I could see she was vexed.

As I left the opera I met Teresa in her sedan chair. She bade me to supper with her; and placing my carriage at the count's service, I took a chair and followed her. What a happy evening we spent! I asked her if it were true about Greppi? She said he was only a friend and that, moreover, as she was rich, she intended to remain independent.

The tailor brought me my domino next afternoon, and the countess asked me if I would be kind enough to take her to the ball in my carriage, and she would do without Triulzi. I took this as an advance on her part; and as soon as we were side by side, I told her that the sable robe was at her disposition if she would be kind to me in return.

'You insult me, sir, and I am the more astonished because you of all people ought to know better.'

'My dear countess, there is no insult in admiration. Forgive me if I am too bold; make me happy, and wear the dress, which will become you mightily.'

'I could only forgive you if I loved you, and your gross behaviour is more calculated to make me detest you.'

'My manners are the outcome of my temperament. I cannot brook delay; waiting cools my ardour. You would rather see me timidly adoring, I suppose?'

'No matter what you were, I could never care for you.'

'We are agreed on that point; I do not, and I never could, care for you.'

'And yet you would spend a thousand sequins on me.'

'Not for love of you, but because I want to humiliate you, and mortify your insupportable pride.'

God knows what the proud Castilian's answer would have been, but just then the carriage stopped at the theatre door. We separated; she went to her box, and I to the gaming-table, where I spent four hours neither winning nor losing, but the last half-hour I lost heavily. On the road home the quarrel began again.

'I know you lost at the tables to-night, and I am glad. The marquis will give you a thousand sequins for the dress. You had better accept his offer; it may bring you luck.'

'It would bring you luck as well, for, of course, he intends the dress for you.'

'Perhaps.'

'You will never get it so. You know the only way to obtain it. I don't care a pin for the money.'

'And I don't care a pin for you or your dress.'

'The same to you.'

We continued to exchange courtesies of this kind till we reached the house.

The count came into my room to condole with me.

'Triulzi would give you a thousand sequins if you liked,' he said; 'that would set you up again.'

'For the sable dress, eh? I would rather give it to your wife, but she says she won't take it from me.'

'I am surprised, for she is wild about it. You must have wounded her pride somehow. Take my advice; sell it to Triulzi!'

'I will think about it, and give you an answer to-morrow.'

I rose early next morning and called on Greppi the banker. I drew out a thousand sequins, at the same time begging him not to mention my private concerns to any one. On returning I found the count seated in front of my fire.

'My wife is furious with you,' he said, 'and she won't tell me the reason.'

'The reason is that I will not let any one give her that sable robe but me. She won't accept it from me, but I do not see why she should be furious about it.'

'It is foolish of her, no doubt, but listen to me. You

seem to despise the money, and I congratulate you on being able to do so. The sum would make *me* happy. Sacrifice vanity to friendship, take the thousand sequins from the marchese, and lend them to me.'

I burst out laughing at this proposition, and the poor count blushed with shame. I embraced him, adding maliciously—

'I will sell the dress to Triulzi, but I won't lend you the money; I will give it to your wife. But, remember, she must make herself agreeable. Now I hope you quite understand me, and if you can arrange it that way, my dear count, I am willing that she shall wear the dress.'

'I will see,' said the poor husband, and left the room.

My valet Clairmont came in to announce a visitor. It was a young Venetian named Barbaro, whom I had known intimately in bygone times. He also had been a prisoner in 'The Leads,' and was an exile from his country.

'I saw you losing last night,' he said, 'and for the sake of our former friendship I have come to propose to you a means by which you can make a great deal of money. But you must let me present you to several rich young men who are fond of cards, and who generally lose.'

'Where am I to meet them?'

'In one of the best houses of Milan. If you consent, I will take the bank, and am certain to win. I only want you to furnish the funds to start the bank.'

'I imagine you are a very good dealer?'

'I am.'

This was as much as to tell me he cheated.

'My dear compatriot,' said I, 'I cannot accede to your proposal till I have seen the company you want to introduce me to.'

I sent for my carriage, and we drove to a house on the outskirts of Milan. Here he introduced me to a handsome old man, a respectable-looking lady, and two young girls—cousins. He announced me as a Venetian, in disgrace with the State, but a bachelor, and rich enough to snap my fingers

at their lordships. I certainly had every appearance of wealth. My costume was gorgeous; my rings, snuff-boxes, chains, my watch set with diamonds, my diamond and ruby cross, which I wore on a wide crimson ribbon, gave me an appearance of importance. The cross was the Order of the Spur which the Pope had given me. I had carefully removed the spur, so that no one could guess what it really was; and one would no more say to a gentleman, 'What order is that?' than one would say to a lady, 'How old are you?'

I left off wearing this cross in 1765, when the prince palatine of Murcia told me to get rid of the rubbish! It was he who knocked away the first stone from the arch supporting the kingdom of Poland.

The old man of the house was a marchese; the two cousins each bore the title of marchesa; they were very beautiful. I wanted to find out more about them, as I had no confidence in Barbaro. In half an hour visitors began to arrive, on foot and in carriages, several well-dressed ladies and equally well-dressed young men. We were about twenty in all. We sat round a large table and played a game called 'Bankruptcy.' When I had lost a few sequins, I left with Barbaro.

'I will lend you two hundred sequins,' I said; 'but as I don't want to lose them, you must find me security for them. You must give me half your profits, but be careful not to let any one know I am interested in your game. If I think any one suspects us, I will punt against you and ruin you.'

'You can rely on my discretion; besides, it is to my advantage to have people believe the bank belongs to me.'

I met Triulzi at the opera that evening.

'*A propos de rien*,' said he, 'I hear you have decided to let me have the sable robe. I am very much obliged to you, and will give you the fifteen thousand francs whenever you like.'

'You can send for the dress to-morrow morning. By the

bye, I saw the young ladies at church, who interest me immensely—two cousins, the Marchesa Q. and the Marchesa F.'

'I know them; they are of very good family, and I have never heard a word against them except that they are poor. I have been told that one of them has a lover, but it is a secret. I can introduce you to them if you like.'

Triulzi's servant came in the morning and carried off the much discussed dress. It was a Friday, and the marquis dined with us. He sent a superb fish dinner, and arrived soon after himself, with the dress in a basket. He presented it ceremoniously to the proud Spanish lady, who was profuse in her thanks. He laughed like a man who was used to these little things; but told her that if she was wise she would sell it again, as every one knew she was too poor to wear such a costume. This not very flattering remark drew down on his head a torrent of abuse. 'Why,' she asked, 'had he been such a fool as to give her a dress which she could not wear?'

During the dispute the Marchesa Menafoglio was announced. The dress spread out on the table attracted her eyes at once, and she said, 'I would like to buy that.'

'I did not buy it to sell again,' replied the countess with acrimony.

'I beg pardon,' said the other lady, and changed the conversation. But when she had gone, the Spaniard gave vent to her anger, and fell foul of Triulzi, who retorted with the most stinging sarcasms wrapped up in exquisitely polite form; till at last, baffled and worn out, she went to bed.

Triulzi handed me the fifteen thousand francs, and took his leave. When he had gone, the count told me, if I had nothing better to do, I might keep his wife company, as he had some business to attend to.

'My dear fellow,' said I, 'I have the thousand sequins in my pocket, and if she is reasonable I will give them to her.'

I went up into my room and deposited the gold Triulzi

had given me, and took the notes I had drawn that morning in their place. This was a piece of foolish ostentation. I was anxious to prove that the marchese's money was nothing to me, for I had plenty besides.

Zenobia just then brought me my ruffles. I was fool enough to suggest that she should send her tailor packing and live with me. Luckily she was not such a fool as to imagine I meant what I said.

I found madame in bed. After I sat down beside her I inquired tenderly after her health, and complained of the cold.

'Are you not going out?' she said. 'You have your *robe de chambre* on, and your hair is not done?'

'I would rather stay with you, if I may.'

'Will you sacrifice your gambling to me this evening?'

'Willingly. I have already lost heavily, and I don't want to lose the money the marchese has just handed me for the dress you would not accept from my hand.'

'It would be a pity to lose such a sum.'

'It will not be lost, for I intend to give it to you. But I feel very chilly. May I shut the door?"

'No; I prefer it open.'

'Then I will say good-bye, madame. I am going back to my nice warm fire.'

'You are a very bad man; but you can stay, you amuse me.'

I stayed, but—was it because I remembered the bought dress, or was it because I remembered the fair Zenobia, the tailor's betrothed, who had been busy mending my linen? Be it as it may, the beautiful Spaniard found me insensible to her fascinations.

How deeply she was mortified only a woman could say, and I did not behave generously.

'It is not my fault, madame, if your charms have so little power over me. Here are fifteen thousand francs to console you.' So saying I laid them down on the table and left her.

I was detestable, I feel it; but my instinct served me, as the sequel of the story will show.

Her behaviour at dinner next day astonished me. She was so serenely affable and polite that I was sorry for having insulted her so outrageously. When her husband left us alone, I said that I knew I was a monster, and that I feared she must hate me.

'You a monster! On the contrary, I am most grateful to you. I can't imagine what you can possibly have to reproach yourself with?'

I took her hand, and was carrying it to my lips, when she bent down and kissed my cheek. I blushed crimson with shame and repentance.

There was a masked ball at the opera that night. I wore a costume in which I flattered myself no one would recognise me. I even changed my snuff-box, watch, and purse. The contents of the latter, to wit, seven hundred Venetian sequins, I lost in less than an hour. Every one expected to see me beat a retreat after this; but taking another purse from my pocket, I began to stake doubles or quits. Luck was with me. I soon broke the bank, and rose from the table the richer by two thousand eight hundred and fifty-six sequins. As I went downstairs two pretty female masks accosted me, telling me that '*Messer Grand*'[1] was waiting for me at the door. From this I concluded that they had penetrated my disguise, though I had no clue to their identity. One of them asked me for a pinch of snuff. I handed her my box, at the same time pressing a spring, which disclosed a painting in the lid. They both looked at it, then—

'For shame!' they said. 'As a punishment for your impertinence, you shall never know who we are.'

Vexed with myself for having offended them, I followed them; and meeting Barbaro, learned from him that they were the two charming cousins—the Marchesa Q. and the Marchesa F.

Towards the end of the evening a mask dressed as a

[1] The Grand Inquisitor.

Venetian boatman was invited by a Venetian peasant-girl to dance the *forlana*[1] with her; and to prove that he had a right to wear his dress, he accepted, but acquitted himself so badly he was hissed. I have always been passionately fond of the *forlana*, and I asked the peasant if she would try it with me. She accepted, a circle was formed round us, and we danced it twice. This is enough for any man: but a young girl, dressed as a shepherdess, and wearing no mask, asked me to dance it with her. I had not the courage to refuse, and went through the performance again. She danced divinely, and made a double turn round the circle three times. I was exhausted and out of breath, but it seemed as if she could go on for ever. At the end she whispered my name in my ear. Surprised and delighted, I asked for hers. She said she was a Venetian, and that I should know who she was if I would go and see her at the 'Three Kings.'

'I am there with my father and mother, who are old friends of yours.'

'You will see me on Monday.'

Tired as I was, I was only able to sleep for a couple of hours, for we were all going to Zenobia's marriage—count, countess, marquis, and myself. The wedding dinner was to be at a country house called the 'Apple Gardens.' There were about twenty guests in all, good plain country people. They were a little disconcerted at first, but we soon put them at their ease. There were many pretty girls among them, but I was too much taken up with the bride to pay attention to them. The dinner lasted three hours; it was abundant, and the wines exquisite, but no one knew that I had provided the funds. We all sang, or recited poetry; and we rose from table in the highest of spirits. Everybody embraced his or her neighbour, and I could not help laughing when I saw the haughty countess offer her cheek to the wizened little tailor. Dancing began when the fiddles ar-

[1] *Forlana*, so called because it is the national dance of the peasants of Friuli.

rived. The bride opened the ball by dancing a minuet with the bridegroom. She danced gracefully, if not well; but the tailor, whose legs were made only to be crossed, was so comical, I thought the countess would die a-laughing. After the minuets refreshments were handed about, with a profusion of *confetti*, a coloured sweetmeat which they make at Milan better than they do at Verdun.

When the ball was over, I asked the tailor if I should take his wife home in my carriage. He was a man of sense, and looked flattered. Less ambitious than Cæsar, he was satisfied to come second with a beautiful woman.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE IMAGE OF WAX

I was going to the opera next night, and should most probably have finished the evening at the gaming-table, but I met Cesarino, and spent two delightful hours talking with him. He opened his heart to me, and begged me to speak to Teresa for him. He had a strong desire to be a sailor, and he assured me he felt convinced that if his mother would allow him the funds necessary to engage in commerce, he should make his fortune. I promised I would do what I could.

After supping soberly with the dear youth, I went to bed. I remained in my room next day, and did not see the countess until after dinner. Her husband had gone to San Angelo; and as she was alone, common politeness compelled me to pay my respects to her and to apologise for not having presented myself at table. She was very amiable, and told me I was to do exactly as I liked in her house. I was sure she was playing a game, but I wanted her to think me her dupe. I said fatuously that when Lent came I would make up for the dissipations of the carnival, which had engrossed me to her detriment.

'I hope so,' answered the perfidious Spaniard, with one of those enchanting smiles peculiar to a woman who is possessed of the lust of revenge. At the same time, she offered me a pinch of snuff, and took one herself.

'But what is this, dear countess?' I asked. 'This is not snuff!'

'No; a powder which is good for headaches. It makes one's nose bleed.'

I was vexed, but said laughingly that I was not suffering

from migraine, and that I did not like my nose to bleed.

'You will not bleed much,' she said, still smiling, 'and it will do you good.' She had hardly spoken when we both sneezed three or four times running, and a moment after a drop of blood fell on my hand. She took up a silver bowl which was on the table.

'Come nearer,' she said, 'for I am beginning to bleed too.'

So there we were, holding our heads over the same basin. In a few minutes the bleeding ceased, and we washed ourselves with cold water in another basin.

'The mingling of our blood,' she said, 'will cause a great sympathy between us, perhaps a friendship which will end only with the death of one of us.'

I did not pay much attention to her words, but the reader will see how short a lease she gave this friendship. I asked her to give me a little of the powder, but she refused; neither would she tell me its name, declaring it was a friend who had given it her. On leaving her I sought an apothecary, and described the powder and its effects to him, but he knew no more than I did. He could only say that euphorbia sometimes did produce bleeding of the nose; but it was not a question of 'sometimes,' the result had been immediate. This little incident gave me food for reflection. Madame was Spanish, and she evidently hated me—two reasons for attaching importance to what had occurred. The following day Clairmont informed me that a Capuchin friar wished to speak to me. I told him to give him alms and send him away; but the monk refused the money, saying he must see me alone.

He was an imposing old man. I went to meet him, and offered him a chair with a low bow, but he took no heed of my civilities.

'Sir,' said he, still standing, 'pay attention to what I am going to say to you. If you despise my warning, it may cost you your life. When you have heard me to the end, do exactly what I tell you to do, but you must not ask me a single question, for I cannot answer. You will guess, no

doubt, that my silence is due to the inviolable seal of confession, which all Christians must respect. My vow and my good faith are above suspicion, for I have no interest to serve in seeking you. I am impelled to speak to you. I have no doubt it is your guardian angel who uses me to your salvation. God will not abandon you. Tell me if my words move you, and if I can safely tell you what is in my heart.'

'Be assured, reverend father, that I have listened to you with attention and respect. Speak; your words not only move me, but inspire me with a kind of terror. I promise to follow your advice if there is nothing in it contrary to honour and common sense.'

'Good; but you must also promise me that however this affair turns out, you will not compromise me by any indiscretion. You will not speak of me to any one. You will not say to any one that you know me or that you do not know me.'

'I swear it to you on my faith as a Christian. But speak, I implore you; I am burning with curiosity.'

'You must go alone, to-day, before noon, to such and such a square, such and such a house, ring at the left-hand door on the second floor. Tell the person who opens it that you wish to speak to Madame ——. You will be admitted without difficulty; I do not even think your name will be asked; but if it is, give an assumed one. When you see Madame —— speak to her quietly and gently; try and gain her confidence. She is poor; give her two or three pieces of gold; this will win her to you. Then tell her with assurance that you will not leave the room till she gives you the little bottle which a servant gave her last night with a letter. Be firm if she refuses, but do not make any noise. Do not allow her to leave the room or to call in any one. If needs be, promise her double the sum the other party is to pay her, if she will give you the bottle. The amount will not be serious, but anyhow your life is of more value to you than all the gold of Peru. I cannot say more, but tell me before I go that you will obey me.'

'Yes, reverend father, I will be directed by the angel who has brought you hither.'

'So be it, and God bless you.'

I did not feel inclined to laugh, ridiculous as the worthy priest's conjuration appeared. There is a lingering remnant of superstition in me which I have never been able to get rid of. Besides this, the Capuchin looked honest and trustworthy. I took the paper on which I had written down the address, put two small pistols in my pocket, and set out for the mysterious house. Clairmont accompanied me as far as the square, when I bade him wait.

I was admitted into the presence of a hideous old woman. I gave her two sequins, whereupon she said she knew I was in love, and that it was my own fault if I was unhappy, but that she would give me something to help my case. I knew by this I was speaking to a supposed sorceress. The famous Bontemps of Paris had used much the same language to me. But when I told her I would not leave the room without the famous bottle and all that went with it, her face became horrible to see. She trembled violently, and tried to leave the room, but I opened my pocket knife and brandished it at her head. But when I offered her double the sum which had been promised her by my enemy, she quieted down.

'I shall lose six sequins,' she said, 'but you will gladly give me twice that amount when you see yourself, for now I recognise you.'

'Who am I?'

'You are Giacomo Casanova the Venetian.'

I drew twelve sequins from my purse and laid them on the table. The old woman was moved to tears.

'I should not have caused your death,' she said, 'but I should have caused you to love madly and to suffer.'

'Explain yourself.'

I followed her into a small room filled with extraordinary things—bottles and phials of all sizes, stones of all colours, metals, minerals, nails, both large and small, pincers, a

furnace, and a quantity of formless and hideous statuettes.

'Here is your bottle.'

'What is in it?'

'Your blood mixed with that of the countess, as you may read in this note.'

I then understood what it was all about, and I wonder now I did not burst out laughing. Instead of that, however, my hair stood on end at the thought of the abominable Spaniard, and a cold sweat covered my body.

'What would you have done with the blood?'

'I should have anointed you with it; you shall see how.'

She opened a casket about two feet long, in which was a naked wax figure lying on its back. My name was written on it; and although it was clumsily and badly made, my features were recognisable. The image wore a cross and order like mine. Certain parts of the figure were most monstrously out of proportion, and I could not help laughing, it was so ill modelled.

'Laugh away!' said the witch, 'but it would have been the worse for you if I had bathed you in that blood, according to certain rites I alone know, and it would have gone harder still with you if I had then laid your image on a burning brazier.'

'Well, it belongs to me now. Here are your twelve sequins! Now light a fire, and I will melt down this little monster; as for the blood, allow me to throw it out of the window.' The old woman was delighted to see me melt the wax, as she doubtless feared I should carry all these things away as evidence against her. She said I was an angel of goodness, and besought me to pardon her and not to tell any one what had passed. I swore that not even the countess should know. Then the old hag offered, for another dozen sequins, to make the countess fall madly in love with me. I told her I did not care about it, and advised her to give up her hideous trade, which sooner or later would bring her to the stake.

In spite of the money this nonsense had cost me, I was not

sorry to have followed the advice of the Capuchin, who seriously believed I was a doomed man. I think he must have got wind of the affair from the confession of some servant who had taken the blood to the sorceress. I was determined that the countess should never guess I had discovered her little plot, so I was more polite to her than ever. It was lucky for me that she pinned her faith in witchcraft, or she might have had recourse to hired assassins to revenge her.

I made her a present of a fine mantle; and as I was kissing her hand—

'I dreamt,' said I, 'that you were so angry with me you hired ruffians to murder me.'

She blushed violently, and said she had not taken leave of her senses. After that I left her very pensive, plunged in a gloomy reverie. Whether she thought better of it or not, I cannot tell, but at any rate she gave me no further cause for complaint.

The reader will remember the two pretty cousins to whose house Barbaro had taken me, and whom I had met again at the masked ball. I had become very friendly with the brother of one of them, an officer, and through him was now an accepted visitor at the house. The girls were consumed with a desire to go to a grand masquerade which was to be given in Milan, and in which their parents would not allow them to take part. I offered to manage it for them, but they declared that some one would be sure to recognise them. I was determined to carry it through. I hired an apartment of four rooms, in a lonely street; and when I had got so far in my preparations, asked permission of the young lieutenant.

'I see no objection; only a certain young nobleman, a great friend of mine, and an admirer of my cousin, ought to be of the party.'

'With all my heart. Be ready, all of you, on Sunday, at twilight. We will meet, sup together, after that we will

disguise ourselves and go to the ball. How tall is your sweetheart? What kind of man is your cousin's friend?'

'My sweetheart is two inches shorter than my sister, and is plumper. My friend is built much as you are; if you were dressed alike, you might be taken one for the other.'

'Now leave me to think it out.'

I had need of a trustworthy person and a tailor. Naturally, I thought of Zenobia and her husband. I told the tailor to take me to the best *costumier* in Milan.

'Show me, sir, the handsomest dresses you have for men and for women.'

He spread out a dozen before me. I chose a blue velvet suit lined with white satin, and a sulphur-coloured velvet suit lined with satin of the same tint, two pairs of breeches in velvet pile, with coats and waistcoasts of embroidered silk. I then chose for the ladies a flame-coloured satin, and a lilac satin, and a striped *peau-de-soie*. I bought two men's shirts, three ladies' smocks, and handkerchiefs, and several odd yards of velvet, silk, and satin. I paid two hundred ducats for all these things; but only on condition that if any one found out where I had bought them, the *costumier* was to take them back, no matter in what condition they might be, and return me my money. When we got back to my rooms, I locked the door on the tailor and told him I would blow out his brains if he breathed a word to any one of the work I was going to give him. I then spread the finery on the table; and taking up a dagger, I made cuts and tears in the coats and breeches in every direction, laughing the while at his piteous face when he saw me thus spoil good clothes. I then handed him the odds and ends of stuff.

'Here, my good fellow,' said I, 'is the work I have cut out for you. Now fall to and patch them up with as much taste and as striking a contrast as you can, so that each patch produces its effect. You have no time to lose. I will have your meals served to you here, but you won't leave this room till all is finished. I am going to fetch your wife, so

that you can work together—and you may sleep in the next room.'

'But for the love of God, sir, why have you treated these fine clothes like that? And are you going to use the dresses in the same way?'

'Precisely.'

'What a pity! My wife will weep over them.'

'I will console her.'

On my way to fetch Zenobia I bought five pairs of pearl-grey silk stockings, two beaver hats, two caricature masks for the men, and three natural ones for the women, and three plates in painted porcelain. I put Zenobia and my purchases into a sedan chair, and so back to my rooms, where we found the tailor busy.

A woman's imagination is always more lively than a man's. As soon as Zenobia grasped my idea, she fell to with a will, and slit and tore the dresses so that they should incite admiration in spite of their raggedness. They were the most ill treated about the throat, shoulders, and arms, so that the batiste chemises would be visible underneath, and the fringed petticoats would allow quite half of a pretty leg to be seen.

The work was done by Saturday; the ball was to be on Sunday. I dismissed the tailor with six sequins, but kept his wife to wait on my three beautiful beggar women, whom I had not let into the secret.

'You, sir,' said I to the young officer, 'must have a carriage with four horses, and it must take all four of you outside one of the gates and bring you in at another. You can walk to the ball from my rooms, and return to them in sedan chairs. In this way we shall put people off the scent.'

I had determined to dress myself as a Pierrot; there is no disguise which better destroys one's identity, as it hides the colour of the skin. The tailor made me a fine new suit, and in the pockets of the trousers I put the new purses, each containing five hundred sequins. By seven o'clock on Sunday the table was set for supper. At five minutes after the hour they arrived. My friend's friend, the marchese, was charming,

young, handsome, rich, very much in love with the pretty cousin, whom he treated with great respect. The lieutenant's mistress was charming, and devoted to her lover. After supper I said—

'As I am not going to be with you, I must tell you your rôles. You are to represent five beggars—two men and three women—in rags.'

I was secretly amused at their dismal faces when I made this announcement, and went on—

'You will each of you have a platter in your hand, and you will go arm in arm through the ballrooms, asking for alms, and playing your beggarly parts. Now come along and put on your rags!' So saying, I flung open the bedroom door. The first thing they saw was the beautiful Zenobia standing among the piles of rich but ragged raiment.

'Ladies,' said I, 'here are your dresses, here are your chemises, your stockings, and your handkerchiefs. On this toilette table are sundry other articles which may be useful to you. Here are your masks, and here are the plates to receive the alms. These garters will show your abject poverty, and the holes in the stockings will prove you have not even the means to buy silk to darn them with. These bits of string will fasten your shoes instead of buckles, and we will make holes in your shoes, which you will carefully wear down at heel.'

While I was rattling this off, I saw admiration take the place of disgust on their faces.

"Now, gentlemen, here are your ragamuffin's clothes. I forgot to lacerate the beavers, but that is easily done. What do you think of them? Now, ladies, we must leave you. Shut the door, because you must change your smocks.'

The marchese was enthusiastic. 'What figures we shall cut!' he cried. 'Magnificent! these superb clothes all torn and tastefully patched—a gorgeous piece of burlesque!'

In half an hour we were ready. The torn stockings, the broken shoes, the fine lace ruffles all in jags, the long floating hair, the beautiful porcelain plates cracked on purpose, all

made up an *ensemble* of the most sumptuous misery. The girls were longer in dressing than we were. On account of their head-dresses, they let their hair stream down their backs in most admired disorder. That of Marchesa Q. was the longest; it fell below her knees. Their white arms, shoulders, throats, and legs peeped through the holes in the costumes. We could not suppress our cries of admiration.

I showed them how to move their heads piteously but not awkwardly, how to use their handkerchiefs so that the holes and the fineness of the cambric would be noticed. We put on our masks and started. I went in first; and as there were twenty other Pierrots, no one took any notice of me. Five minutes later every one was running to the door to see the curious cortège. The marchese was between the two cousins, who were walking slowly and stiffly. The marchesa Q., with her flame-coloured dress and her magnificent hair, attracted great attention. The gaping crowd pressed closer. The orchestra struck up a minuet. Three masks in dominoes invited my three beggar girls to dance with them. They refused, showing as an excuse their slippers down at heel.

After following them about for some time I went into the card-room, where I saw Canano, who was playing for high stakes. A man of about my height and figure was playing against the bank, double or quits. He won three times in succession; then gathering up his money left the table, and I slipped into his vacant chair.

'I believe that was the Chevalier de Seingalt,' said the lady, when he had left the room.

'No,' answered some one, 'for I have just met him in the hall dressed as a ragamuffin, with four others.'

I went on quietly putting sequins on a card without counting them. I lost six or seven times in succession. I heard some one whisper to Canano—

'That is not Seingalt; he does not play that game; besides, he is dancing.'

Then the luck turned; my card turned up three times, and I won more than I had lost. I put the lot, double or

quits, on one card, won, and ceased playing, for I saw the bank was in distress. Canano paid me; and while he was shuffling the cards some one cried, 'Here come the beggars!'

Canano looked fixedly at the marchese, and suddenly asked him for a pinch of snuff. 'Now,' thought I, 'they will find out who it is!' but to my joy, the marchese modestly drew a paper screw of snuff from his pocket and handed it to the banker. Every one burst out laughing, and the marchesa stretched out her hand and begged alms of the banker.

'I can't feel sorry for any one with such glorious hair,' said Canano. 'If you will stake it on a card, I will count it as a thousand sequins.'

She took no notice of the compliment, but held the plate to me, and I dropped a handful of sequins in it and into those of her companions.

'Pierrot seems to like beggars,' said Canano, laughing.

The ragged crew then bowed low and went off.

The Marchese Triulzi, who was beside him, said 'The ragamuffin in straw color is certainly Casanova.'

'I am sure of it,' said Canano; 'but who are the others?'

'We shall find out; but their disguise is really expensive, for all the things are new.'

I had won in all two thousand five hundred sequins, for which Canano gave me a note of hand, which I put carefully in my pocket. I went to a box on the third tier, where I had given my friends rendezvous.

'Our pockets are full of dragées,' said the girls; 'every one loaded us with sweetmeats.'

'You have made us all so very happy,' said the lieutenant's sweetheart.

'*La fin couronne l'œuvre*, mademoiselle, and I hope the end will be better than the beginning.' Saying this, I gently pressed the marchesa's hand, and felt her fingers tremble in mine.

'Let us go down now, I want to dance, and as a Pierrot I know I shall make you all laugh.'

We put on our masks, and I went down first. After playing tricks on the harlequins and columbines, I recognised Teresa in a domino, and invited her, awkwardly, to dance a country dance.

'You are the Pierrot who has just broken the bank?' she said. I nodded, and she put her arm through mine.

I danced like a madman, keeping time and step always, so as not to spoil the figure, but throwing in many queer capers. After the dance I took her back to the box where the banker Greppi was waiting. Then I took a sedan chair and went back to my rooms, where I was soon joined by the beggars. The young ladies changed their costumes, and the lieutenant accompanied them in chairs to the gate, where their carriage was to meet them. The marchese remained with me. He told me politely that he would like to reimburse me at least one-half of the money I had spent on their entertainment.

'I was afraid you were going to humiliate me by some such request,' I answered.

'I had no intention of humiliating you, and I will not insist. Now it is I who am humiliated.'

'No—for I count on your good sense. You see, money is no consideration to me, and I give you my word of honour you shall pay all the expenses of the next fête.'

The carnival lasts four days longer at Milan than anywhere else, which shortens Lent by almost a week. There were three more masked balls to take place; before the last one the lieutenant came to see me.

'The marchese,' said he, 'invites you to sup with him, and the beggars; but as he has a surprise in store for us, he wishes me to ask you to lend him your rooms for some hours beforehand, and to allow your amiable waiting-maid to assist him.'

'Willingly,' said I. 'Tell the amiable marchese that everything here is at his disposal.'

On the appointed evening, when we were all assembled, the marchese told us we had better dress before supper.

'Ladies,' said he, pointing to an enormous bundle, 'here are your things. Madame Zenobia will assist you while we dress in the other room.'

He took up another packet, and when we three were alone he opened it. We all burst out laughing when we saw women's clothes—chemises, embroidered slippers with high heels, superb garters, and richly laced night-caps. Nothing was forgotten, silk stockings with red and yellow clocks, stays, petticoats, fichus, fans, workbags, rouge-box, masks, gloves, all was perfect! We helped each other to dress, and when all was done we looked shabby enough, except the young officer, who might have passed for a pretty woman.

We opened the door, and saw the three girls standing with their backs to the chimney-piece dressed in men's clothes, looking like three young pages, minus the effrontery. We men on the other hand presented ourselves with affected modesty and an air of timid reserve, which ill accorded with our inches. After two hours at table we rose, and gloom overcast the two beautiful cousins. They did not at all like going to the ball in this guise, and said so.

'Very well,' said I; 'we will play games, make punch, and amuse ourselves, and when we are tired we will go to sleep!'

On Shrove Tuesday, as there was no ball, I went to the tables, where I lost all the money I had about me. I was just leaving when a woman, disguised as a man, gave me a card and made signs to me to play on it. I laid it down before the banker, telling him I would stake a hundred sequins on it. I lost, and lost nine hundred more in succession, for which I gave a note, payable next day. As I was leaving the rooms the ill-omened mask, accompanied by another mask, came up to me, and the latter, taking my hand, whispered that if I would go to the inn of the 'Three Kings' next morning, I should meet an old friend.

'Who is the friend?'

'Myself.'

'And who are you?'

'Follow me to the end of the arcade,' he said, 'and you will see.'

When he took off his mask I recognised Croce. I knew he had been banished from Milan, and I understood his reasons for not giving his name in public.

'I am surprised to see you here,' I said.

'I should think so; I only dare come because it is carnival time and I can remain masked. I am trying to force my relations to pay me my due; but they put off as long as they can, in hopes that I shall be obliged to go away.'

'But shall you leave even if they have not paid you?'

'I shall be forced to. Give me twenty sequins, so that I can go off on Sunday morning. My cousin, who owes me ten thousand francs, will perhaps refuse to give me a tenth of it; if he does, before I leave I shall kill him.'

'Your masked friend here has made me lose a thousand sequins, which I don't know how to pay.'

'I know. I am an unfortunate wretch, and bring bad luck to all my friends. It was I who told her to give you the card.'

'Is she from Milan?'

'No; she is from Marseilles, and is the daughter of a rich commission agent. I fell in love with her, and she eloped with me. Unfortunately for her, I had plenty of money then, but lost it all at Geneva. Help me to get away, I implore you.'

Touched with compassion, I went back and asked Canano to give me twenty sequins, which I handed to Croce.

Early on Monday morning Clairmont brought me an unsigned letter, which read as follows—

'Sir,—Have pity on a most unfortunate creature! M. de Sainte Croix has gone away and left me. He has not paid his bill here. God alone knows what will become of me. Come, I implore you, if it is only to advise me!'

I dressed hastily and ran to the 'Three Kings,' where I found a young woman of most interesting appearance. I read in her face candour, modesty, and injured innocence.

She begged pardon for her boldness; and begged me to dismiss a woman who was sitting in the room with her.

'I do not know what she wants,' she said, 'for I only speak French, but she has been here for the last hour. I think she wishes me to understand that she can be useful to me, but I do not feel inclined to accept her help.'

'Who told you to come here?' said I to the woman.

'A man-servant, who said that a young foreign lady was here all alone and in great distress. I came out of kindness; however, I see I am not wanted. I leave her in good hands, and I congratulate her,' and with a cunning smile the creature withdrew.

The poor girl then told me in a few words what I already knew—that she had left her home with Croce, who called himself M. de Sainte Croix. She added that he had been at the tables ever since receiving my twenty sequins, and that on Sunday morning he had disappeared, leaving no address.

'He has left Milan, I am sure,' she said, 'and what am I to do. The landlord is clamouring for his bill. If I sell everything I might manage to pay it; but what would become of me then?'

'Would you dare to return to your father?'

'Yes, sir, certainly; my father would forgive me if I declared myself willing to enter a convent.'

'Well, then, I will take you to Marseilles myself, and meantime I will find some honest people who will look after you.'

I paid the bill, which was modest enough; then I left the poor girl, telling her to keep her door locked and to receive no one till my return. I went to Zenobia and asked her, in the presence of her husband, if she could find a little corner for my protégée.

'I will give her my place,' cried the tailor, like a good fellow, 'she can sleep with my wife. I will take a room near by, and she can stay as long as she likes.'

I wrote a few lines to the young woman and sent them

by Zenobia. The next day she was comfortably installed with these good people, a little cramped for room perhaps, but quite happy, and looking extremely pretty.

I was in a most virtuous humour, but I apprehended some difficulty in maintaining that attitude during our voyage to Marseilles.

I had nothing more to do in Milan, but I had promised the count to spend a fortnight with him at San Angelo, a country place belonging to his family. He had a married brother who lived there, and he was constantly telling me how delighted this brother would be to make my acquaintance.

On the fourth day of Lent I said good-bye to Teresa, Greppi, and the Marchesa Q., and the count and I set off for San Angelo. The countess did not care to join the party, but stopped at Milan with Triulzi. We arrived at San Angelo in three hours, and found that our hosts were waiting dinner for us.

CHAPTER XIX

CLEMENTINA

THE feudal château of San Angelo is at least eight centuries old, and without any positive style of architecture to guide one as to the exact date of its construction. It is composed of a ground floor divided into a number of small rooms, a second story containing several very large and lofty apartments, and above these a series of wide garrets. The walls, which time has cracked in several places, are of an immense thickness, and prove that our ancestors built for posterity, which is more than can be said of us; for we are beginning to build in the English fashion—that is to say, for the lifetime of one man. The stairs, which are flagged with large stones, are so worn in places that it behoves one to go up and down carefully. The floors are all of brick; and as they have been repaired from time to time, they form a kind of marqueterie more curious than agreeable to the eye. The windows are in keeping with the rest of the building; in some places the panes are missing altogether; and in others the sashes are too worm-eaten to support the weight of glass, so they generally remain open, and have not even shutters. Fortunately, the climate is mild. As for the ceilings, there are not any, huge beams cross and recross the rooms, and birds' nests and spiders' webs do their best to make up for the lack of decoration. This Gothic palace—I cannot call it castle, for there is neither tower nor keep, only over the *porte cochère* an enormous escutcheon, which the family keeps in good order with the greatest care—is a monument of the ancient nobility of the Counts of A. B., and they think it a great deal finer than the most magnificent dwelling of recent date. There are three or four suites of rooms in separate wings of the castle, which are in better repair

than the others, and these suites are occupied by the actual owners, three in number—Count A. B., my friend; Count Ambrose, his brother, whose guest I was; and a third and younger brother, an officer in the Spanish Walloon Guards, just now away with his regiment, and whose rooms I occupied.

Count Ambrose came to meet me on the castle steps as though I had been a great lord; the two big doors were wide open; but I did not take undue pride to myself from this fact, realising that it would have been impossible to shut them without their falling to pieces!

The noble count, his cotton night-cap in his hand, and somewhat negligently dressed, greeted me in a dignified yet modest little speech. He said his brother was wrong to invite me to the contemplation of their poverty; that I should not find the comforts to which I was accustomed. At the same time, he added, I might count on finding a *Milanese heart;* this is a phrase which the good people of Milan use constantly. They are as a general rule honest, hospitable, and frank, very different from the Piedmontese or the Genoese.

Count Ambrose then presented me to the countess his wife and to his two sisters-in-law, one of whom was remarkably beautiful, but shy and awkward. The other was one of those women of whom nothing is to be said; she was neither ugly nor pretty; women such as she can be counted by the hundred. The countess had the face of a Madonna, of an angelic sweetness and candour. She was from Lodi, and had only been married two years. The three sisters were very young, very noble, and very poor. During dinner Count Ambrose told me he had taken her in her poverty because he set more store by character and morals than birth.

'She makes me happy,' he said. 'Though she brought me no fortune, she has taught me to consider everything which we do not possess as superfluity.'

'That,' said I, 'is true philosophy.'

The countess smiled at him; and taking from the arms of a servant a charming baby of five or six months old,

began to nurse it. I am sure if Raphael had seen her, we should have had another sublime picture from his brush.

The dinner would have been excellent without the made dishes, which were detestable. The soup, boiled salt pork, sausage, creams, vegetables, game, *mascarpon* cheese, preserved fruits, were all delicious; but his brother had told him I was a *gourmet*, and poor Ambrose had tried to give me some *entrées* that were simply abominable. Politeness compelled me to taste them, but I promised myself it should be the last time. After dinner I drew my amphitryon to one side, and told him his table was perfect with its ten natural courses, and had no need of made dishes. After that day we had the most simple and delightful fare.

There were six of us at table, all lively and talkative except the beautiful Clementina. This was the name of the young countess who had impressed me so. She only spoke when directly addressed, and always blushing deeply; but as it was only by speaking to her that I could get a glimpse of her bright eyes, I put many questions to her, until at last I saw that it really embarrassed her, so I left her alone, hoping to be better acquainted with her by and by.

Finally I was conducted to my apartment. There was glass in the windows, and curtains, but Clairmont told me he did not dare unpack. As there were no keys to either doors or wardrobes, he would not be responsible for my valuables, he said. I thought he was right, and I sought my host.

'I do not believe there is a key in the whole place, except to the cellar,' he said; 'but in spite of that, everything is perfectly safe. There are no thieves in San Angelo; and even if there were, they would not dare show their noses here.'

'I do not doubt you, my dear count,' said I; 'but it is my duty to suppose there are thieves everywhere. My own valet might seize this opportunity to rob me, and I could not bring it home to him.'

'I quite understand; to-morrow morning the locksmith

shall put keys to your doors, and you will be the only one in the house who deems it necessary to take precautions against robbers.'

I told Clairmont not to unpack my trunks till next day, and I went off with Count A. B. and his sisters-in-law for a walk, Count Ambrose and his wife remaining at home.

'We will go and pay a visit to a certain pretty penitent,' said the count. 'She is, or was, a Milanese Läis, who had such a reputation for beauty, that all the rich men of the city and of neighbouring towns came to pay her homage. The door of her house was opened and shut a hundred times a day. About a year ago the pious people began to cry scandal. Count Firmian had orders from Vienna to shut her up in a convent. Maria Theresa has no tolerance for mercenary beauty, and the beautiful sinner was compelled to make a general confession, and a lifelong penitence was imposed on her. Cardinal Pozzobonelli gave her absolution, and conferred on her the sacrament of Confirmation, changing her baptismal name of Teresa to that of Mary Magdalene. We are the hereditary patrons of a convent consecrated to penitents; it is a most inaccessible place, where the recluses live, deprived of all worldly pleasure, and subjected to every privation. They can only work and pray; they see no other man than the priest, who says mass daily in their chapel.'

This story touched me deeply; my eyes filled with tears. Poor Mary Magdalene! Barbarous Maria Theresa!

As soon as we were announced, the Superior came to receive us, and we were shown into an immense hall, when I at once distinguished the celebrated penitent from among some homely and insignificant young women. As soon as we appeared the poor girls laid aside their knitting or their needlework, and rose to their feet. Magdalene impressed me in spite of the severity of her costume. What beauty! What dignity! My profane eyes, instead of seeing the enormity of her sin, saw only her loveliness. Her beautiful eyes were fixed on the ground; but suddenly raising them, she

looked at me, and cried 'Good God! What do I see! Holy Virgin Mary, come to my help! Horrible sinner! away!—leave this place—although indeed it is more fitting that you should be here than me.'

The Superior said hastily, 'Sir, I beg you not to take offence; the poor creature is not in her right mind—unless, indeed, she has recognised you——?'

'I have never seen her until to-day, madame.'

'Then, sir, please to forgive her; she is not responsible.'

As a matter of fact, I thought her violent apostrophe showed more wit than madness. She resented being made a show of. Tears coursed down my cheeks; the count laughed. A moment later she broke out again, and begged the Superior to send me away. The abbess reminded her that she was the greatest sinner present, and the poor Magdalene left us, weeping bitterly.

Could I have entered Milan at the head of a victorious army, my first act would have been to release this unfortunate being from the female tyrant set over her. I would have thrashed the honey-tongued abbess with a horsewhip if she had tried to oppose me. She told us that poor Magdalene was not evil-natured, and she believed that if God would only keep her from madness she would become in time a saint like her namesake. 'She has begged me,' she said, 'to take the pictures of Saint Louis of Gonzaga and Saint Anthony of Padua out of the oratory, because they distract her thoughts from religion.'

On the way back to the château I noticed that Clementina, on my arm, smiled occasionally to herself. I asked her why?

'I am laughing at the surprise you showed when that poor creature told you you deserved to be shut up in a convent.'

'Perhaps you think so too?'

'God forbid! But, tell me, why did she attack you and not my brother-in-law?'

'Probably because she thinks I look a greater sinner than he.'

'That can be the only reason,' agreed Clementina.

In the evening we were joined by a lady and her daughter, and a young abbé, a relation of the count's. This latter displeased me greatly; he pretended he had met me at Milan, and he made sheep's eyes at Clementina. I went to the window—how useful windows are!—and looked out till the count came and fetched me. I already loved Clementina.

Cards were brought in, and counters of different colours, and I took the bank, laying thirty ducats on the table before me. This was a great sum for such a company. At the end of three hours supper was announced; everybody had won except the poor abbé, who had lost about twenty sequins.

He went away after supper in a very depressed frame of mind. The count accompanied me to my room, and on wishing me good night told me I could sleep in peace; for if my door had no lock on it, neither had that of his sisters, who were my neighbours.

To my great surprise and astonishment, Clementina appeared in my room while Clairmont was putting my hair in papers.

'Sir,' said she, 'as we have no waiting-maid to take care of your linen, I beg you to permit me to look after it.'

'*You*, charming countess!'

'Yes, sir, and please do not raise any objections. I shall be pleased to do it, and I hope I shall give you satisfaction. Give me the shirt you intend to wear to-morrow.'

'I must bow to your wish, countess.'

Clairmont and I dragged the trunk containing my linen into the room. I opened the trunk, and said, 'I want a shirt, a collar, a waistcoat, under-drawers, a pair of stockings, and two pocket handkerchiefs every day; the choice of them is indifferent to me. I leave you mistress of my wardrobe, as I would you were mistress of all else. More blessed than Jupiter, I shall now sleep peacefully. Adieu, charming Hebe!'

I sent Clairmont to tell the count I would do without locks on my doors. How could I insult them all so!

While Clairmont was dressing my hair next morning, Clementina came in with a basket.

'I hope you will be pleased with me,' she said.

I looked at her. There was not the slightest sign of false shame on her face; she had no idea that she had in any way derogated from her position.

The count came in just then, and thanked her simply for having taken such good care of his friend. He drew a letter from his pocket; it was from the abbé, begging him to ask me to wait beyond the time generally allowed for debts of honour, as he could not pay the twenty sequins for at least a week.

'Tell him, my dear count, to pay me when he likes; but tell him, at the same time, not to play this evening, as I should take no notice of his stakes.'

'But if he played ready money?'

'He would only be playing with my money until he has paid me. It is only a trifle, and I do not want him to distress himself about it.'

'He will be much mortified.'

'So much the better,' said Clementina; 'it will teach him not to play beyond his means.'

'Dear Clementina,' said I, when the count had left us, 'tell me if you are vexed at the way I have treated the abbé; if so, I will give you the twenty sequins, and you can hand them over to him. He can pay me before us to-night, and make a good effect.'

'Thank you,' she answered, 'but I am not sufficiently interested in the abbé to accept your offer. As I said before, it will be a good lesson for him.'

We continued to talk together. When the count returned, he professed to be surprised at finding us still *tête-à-tête*.

'I wish,' said he, 'that you two would fall in love with one another.'

'You wish to see us both miserable then,' said Clementina.

'And how so, fair countess?' I exclaimed.

'I, because I should love a most inconstant man, and you,

because you would be sorry for destroying my peace of mind.' So saying she ran off. The count cried—

'Dear Clementina is rather too romantic, but she will grow out of that.'

We then went to bid good morning to the countess, whom we found nursing her baby.

'Do you know, my dear sister,' said the count, 'the chevalier is in love with Clementina, and she returns his affection.'

'I should be delighted,' said the countess, smiling, 'to be related to him by marriage.'

The word marriage is a magic word that often admits of a more flattering construction. I bowed low in acknowledgment, though I must admit that that particular word always touched a very sensitive chord in my heart.

Next day I rose early, and went to wish the sisters good morning in their room. The Countess Eleonora was dressed, but Clementina was still sleeping.

'My sister,' said Eleonora, 'was reading till three o'clock this morning. These books will drive her crazy. Let us play her a trick; lie down beside her.'

I lay gently down. The pretty sleeper stirred, and threw out an arm, thinking it was her sister by her side. When she turned and wished that mock sister good morning with a kiss, Eleonora's burst of laughter surprised her.

'Very pretty!' said she ironically, 'and I congratulate you both.'

'And I,' said I, 'have received the first kiss of my beautiful Hebe!'

'It counts for nothing; I thought I was kissing my sister.'

'No matter, the kiss has produced its effect. Iolas is rejuvenated.'

'Love watches us,' she said, 'and mocks our danger!'

'Let us lay down our arms before him,' said I.

'No,' said she, 'for he would turn and rend us. But if mere kisses can kill, then let us die!'

She then bade me leave her. She loved me, but she loved literature and learning better. This gave her absolute immunity from merely human passion. I went to my room, and wrote in *terze rime*, after the style of Dante, the account of my feelings. I read it to Clementina, and tears rolled down her cheeks, and I had the satisfaction of hearing her remark that she was now convinced that with regard to love and lover's vows, it was a case of 'All or Nothing!'

Clementina's calm and balanced demeanour proceeded, as I have said, from absence of feeling. I could not, try as I might, inspire her with a passionate desire for me such as I felt for her. I read to her from Ariosto the moving episode of Fiordespina, Princess of Spain, the lover of Bradamante, but it left her cold. I then resolved to try and foster passion in her by the almost infallible method of procuring for her new and unaccustomed pleasures. I decided to take the whole family to Milan and give them a sumptuous banquet at my rooms over the pastrycook's. I did not mean to tell them where we were going till we were well on the road, for fear my friend Count A. B. should deem it necessary to warn his wife of our arrival and present his sisters-in-law to her.

I wrote to Zenobia to have three dresses made of fine Lyons silk for three young women of condition. I sent her the measures, and described exactly how I wished them trimmed. That designed for the married sister was to be pearl-coloured, with a rich trimming of Valenciennes. The dresses were to be ready and spread on my bed by a certain day. At the same time I wrote to the pastrycook, ordering a sumptuous dinner for eight persons. I told the countess that I desired to have the honour of entertaining her and her family at dinner, but begged her not to ask any questions as to time and place. She and her good husband entered at once into the spirit of the thing, and agreed to follow wherever I should lead.

'Then,' said I, 'everybody must be ready to-morrow at

eight o'clock. You need take no thought of anything; the carriages will be here to the moment.'

I had included in my invitation the widow lady already spoken of and the good canon; this latter more especially, because as he lost more or less money to me every evening, it was in reality he who was defraying the expenses of the entertainment.

At eight o'clock we were all assembled at breakfast. Men and women alike could not help betraying their intense curiosity as to our destination. When the carriages arrived I put Clementina and the Countess Ambrose with her baby in mine. When all were ready,

'Now for Milan!' I cried.

'Milan! Milan!' exclaimed the guests, and off we started in the midst of laughter and acclamations. Neither of the sisters had ever been to Milan.

'What will my wife say, I wonder?' said Count A. B.

'Nothing, for she will not know, and in any case I am responsible. You will all dine with me at an apartment which I inhabit *incognito*.'

'My dear,' said the countess to her husband, 'you have been talking of taking me to Milan for the last two years; the Chevalier Seingalt has arranged it all in a few hours!'

'True, my dear, but I intended to give you a month there.'

'If you would like to stay a month,' said I, 'I will manage it for you.'

'Thank you, my dear sir; you are really a most extraordinary man!'

We arrived at Milan at midday. The baker's wife came out to meet us, and begged the countess to confide her child to her, at the same time pointing to her own baby, which she held at her magnificent breast. The countess accepted her offer with grace and dignity. This unpremeditated scene delighted me.

I led my guests to my apartments, where I found not only Zenobia, but Croce's mistress, who had put off her

sadness, and was really quite interesting. A letter of recommendation written by the Graces on the forehead of Beauty is never dishonoured, for every one who has his eyes and a heart pays on sight.

'Here are two very pretty young women,' said the countess. 'Who are you, my dears?'

Zenobia answered, 'We are the humble servants of the chevalier, and have the honour to serve you, ladies.'

My humble servants took the ladies' cloaks and followed them into my bedroom, where the three dresses were spread out. The countess, pointing to the pearl-grey one, exclaimed, 'What a lovely robe! Who does it belong to, chevalier?'

'To your husband, madame, to do what he pleases with. I hope that he will give it to you, and that you will not affront him by refusing it. Here, count, this dress is for you, and I will blow out my brains if you do not take it.'

'My dear chevalier, we love you too much to drive you to such an act. This proceeding is worthy of you. I take your beautiful present with one hand, and give it with the other to her for whom it is intended.'

'What, my dear husband, is this magnificent dress really for me? How can I thank you both? I absolutely must put it on for dinner.'

The two other dresses were less rich, but more brilliant. One was of pink and apple-green striped satin, trimmed with feather flowers in the best possible taste; and the other was in sky-blue satin, sprinkled with bouquets of flowers, and trimmed with a thick mignonette ruching. Zenobia told Clementina the green one was for her.

'And how do you know, pray?'

'Because it is the longest, and you are the tallest.'

Eleonora declared that she was dying to try hers on, which she did, and Clementina put on the green.

When we left the room I embraced Count Ambrose cordially, and asked his pardon for the presents I had dared to offer to his family.

'You received me so well,' I said, 'that I could not but try to show my gratitude in some small measure.'

By and by the two pretty sisters reappeared in all the splendour of their new attire. They declared that the dresses fitted to perfection, and were lost in speculation as to how I obtained their measures so accurately.

We sat down to table in excellent spirits. Everything was exquisite; but what crowned the feast was a hamper of oysters from the arsenal at Venice that my pastrycook had managed to get from the Duc de Modena's *maître d'hôtel.* We ate three hundred, for the ladies loved them, and the canon was insatiable, and we washed them down with endless bottles of champagne.

We spent yet another hour taking coffee and punch; then the ladies, donning again their morning costumes, took their places in the carriages. The dresses, packed in cardboard boxes, were put under the seat. Croce's mistress found an opportunity of telling me that she was very happy with Zenobia, and to ask me when I thought of leaving for France.

'You are to be at Marseilles,' said I, 'at the latest, fifteen days after Easter.'

I paid the baker a long bill, for we had drunk over twenty bottles of champagne, and we started on our homeward journey. The road seemed short: champagne, punch, and pleasure had made us all forgetful of distance. We did not reach the château of Saint Angelo till midnight, and we withdrew every one to his room, except myself and Clementina, who loved me now with her whole heart, and proved it.

'Do you imagine, dear Iolas,' she asked me, 'that I can live happily after your departure?'

'My dearest Hebe, for the first few days I know we shall both be miserable; but little by little we shall grow calmer, and even enjoy our regret in philosophic fashion.'

'I cannot understand how when I am with you, and loving me as you say you do, you can speak of the possibility of being unfaithful to me?'

'I do not believe in the possibility, my angel; I only suppose it.'

'I do not see much difference.'

What could I say? Clementina reasoned well, though I reasoned better than she, but that was because I was not in love for the first time. Such words in the mouth of a woman one would like to make happy for ever are only to be answered with kisses and tears.

'Take me with you,' she said; 'I am ready to follow you anywhere, and I should be happy, I know.'

'I could not so far dishonour your family.'

'Then you do not think me fit to be your wife?'

'You are fit for a throne, and it is I who am unworthy of so perfect a wife as you. I must tell you that I have nothing in the world; I may be a beggar to-morrow. Alone, I fear no reverse of fortune; but I should kill myself if I saw you exposed to privation after having thrown in your lot with mine.'

'Why do I feel it an impossibility that your luck should ever turn, and also that you can never be really happy away from me? Your love cannot be as great as mine if you have so much less confidence in its endurance.'

'My darling, if I have less confidence, it is because I have more experience, and a far crueler experience than you, and one that makes me tremble for the future. Love, once touched by fear, loses in strength what it gains in reason.'

'That hard word reason! Must we then part?'

'Needs must, my beloved; but my heart will remain in your keeping. I shall adore you, though I leave you; and if fortune smiles on me in England, you will see me here again next year. I will buy land wherever you wish, and will settle it on you the day of our marriage; our children and the pleasures of literature shall occupy our lives.'

'What a dream! Why can I not go to sleep now, and only awake on the day when we realise these projects, or die if they are doomed not to be realised.'

'When you change your name for mine, dear one, you will be making a *mésalliance*. Will you mind that?'

'No, no; your hand and your name would be the height of my ambition. I shall never repent this. My whole family love you and cherish you. You cannot imagine how pleased I am when I hear them speak well of you; when they laughingly tell me I am in love with you, I answer that I adore you, and *you* know that I speak the truth.'

I cannot conceive now how a man like myself, free as the eagle in the air, could have made up his mind to leave such a prospect of happiness. But so it was. I only stayed seven days longer at San Angelo. From the good canon I had won, luckily, all the money I lost to the family; the last two nights I forced Clementina to go shares in my bank, and she gained a hundred sequins. The canon lost a thousand sequins, of which seven hundred remained, one way and another, in the hands of my friends, which repaid them for their hospitality. I promised to write, and to return the following year. I did correspond with them for some time, but I left off when misfortune fell upon me in London, and I lost all hope of seeing them again. As a matter of fact I never did, but I never forgot Clementina. Six years later, when I returned from Spain, I learned that she had married the Marquis de N. three years after my departure, and was happy with him, and had borne two sons.

I gave Eleonora a fine cameo, bearing the image of the God of Silence, off my finger, and got into the carriage to go. All the family pressed round me, weeping and wishing me good-speed. All but Clementina. Pretending I had forgotten something, I rushed upstairs; she was lying sobbing desperately on the bed. I took her in my arms, and kissed her quivering lips for the last time. She never spoke. I laid her down again and tore myself away. I whispered to Eleonora to go to her sister, and without another word I flung myself into the carriage beside my friend Count A. B. We never spoke till we reached his house. We found his wife *en tête-à-tête* with the Marchese Triulzi.

When I came to settle my accounts I found I was poorer by a thousand sequins than on my arrival in Milan, but I had been most extravagant. I got some letters of credit from Greppi for Marseilles, and one of ten thousand francs for Genoa, and after having kissed the hand of the beautiful Spaniard who had attempted my life, and thanked her for her hospitality, I left Milan, and have never been there since.

My travelling companion, who out of regard for herself and her family I will call Crosin, was charming. She looked very well bred, and her reserve showed she had been carefully educated. She passed as my niece, and I meant to hand her over to her father without seeking to gain her confidence or make her love me. She told me as we travelled that she was sure that M. de Sainte Croix would never have abandoned her had he not felt sure that she had found an honourable protector in me.

'I admire your sentiments, mademoiselle, but I cannot share them. In my opinion, Croce (for that is his real name) behaved liked a scoundrel; for, after all, he could not count on me with certainty. He did not love you, or he could not have left you in such a position.'

'On the contrary, he adored me; but there was no alternative, he must either have abandoned me or killed himself and me.'

'Neither the one nor the other; he should have sold everything he possessed and taken you home. You could have gone quite cheaply to Genoa, and from there by water to Marseilles. But I am wrong to blame him, for I see you still care for him.'

'I own it, and pity him. I shall never see him again, and I shall never love another man. My mind is made up. I shall go into a convent. My father will forgive me; I was blinded by love.'

'You would have left Milan with Croce if he had asked you, even on foot?'

'On foot, and in rags. It would have been my duty to

do so; but he loved me too much to expose me to fatigues and misery.'

'And if you should meet him again at Marseilles, you would rejoin him?'

'Ah, no—never. I am beginning to recover my reason, and my liberty of thought, and the day will come when I shall thank God for letting me forget him.'

An hour after our arrival at Tortona an old priest came to invite me to breakfast with the bishop, to whom the Marchese Triulzi had given me a letter of introduction, and the invitation included 'the lady who was in my company.' The countess's letter did not mention any lady, but the bishop was a Spaniard, and too polite to leave my niece, real or supposed, alone at an inn. She was delighted when she heard we were to dine out together, and made a very fair toilette for a traveller. At noon the bishop's carriage came for us. He was a very tall old man, four inches and more above my height; and in spite of his eighty years he was fresh and alert, well preserved, and solemn, as became a Spanish grandee. When my niece was about to kiss his hand, according to custom, he withdrew it affectionately and offered her the magnificent cross in amethysts and diamonds he wore round his neck to kiss. She did so, saying, 'This is what I love,' at the same time looking out of the corner of her eye at me to mark the double meaning of her words—the allusion to *la Croix*.

There were nine of us at table—four priests and two young nobleman, who were most attentive to my niece, and to whose sallies she replied as a woman used to society. I noticed that the bishop, though he often addressed her, never raised his eyes to her. He was a prudent old gentleman, who knew peril when he saw it, and preferred not to expose himself. After coffee we said good-bye, and at four o'clock we left Tortona for Novi. The next day we arrived at Genoa, where an apartment had been reserved for us—four well-furnished rooms, with a good view, *very comfortable*, as the English say, and they know how to take life easy.

CHAPTER XX

MY BROTHER AND MARCOLINA

On the Tuesday in Holy Week Clairmont came to tell me that a priest wished to speak to me who would not give his name. I ordered him to be shown in. As soon as he entered the room, he folded me in his arms and embraced me. This display of tenderness was highly displeasing to me. I took the abbé by the arm and led him to the window. He was my youngest brother, a ne'er-do-weel, whom I had never cared for, and had not seen for the last ten years.

I asked him what he was doing in Genoa, for he was ragged, dirty, and haggard, yet he was only twenty-eight, and had a magnificent head of hair.

'The story of my misfortunes, dear brother, is a long one.'

'How long have you been here, and who gave you my address?'

'The Count de B., whom I met at M. de Bragadin's.'

'Did you tell him you were my brother?'

'Yes, and he said I was your living image.'

'A great stupid lump of a fellow like you!'

'He did not think me that, for I dined with him.'

'In that costume! Really, you did me credit.'

'He gave me four sequins, which brought me here.'

'The more fool he. And now you are a beggar, I suppose? What do you want? I can do nothing for you. Why did you leave Venice, where, with your masses and your sermons, you could make enough to live like many another honest priest? I will go with you to your inn; but, mind now, you are to tell no one, above all, my servants, that you are my brother.'

'I ought to tell you that I am not alone at my inn, and it is alone that I must speak with you. . . .'

'I must first know that you are not with a band of thieves. But why that deep-drawn sigh?'

'I am ashamed to say I am with a woman.'

'A woman! and you a priest!'

'Forgive me; I was blinded by love and passion. I promised to marry her at Geneva. I dare not return to Venice, for I took her from her father's house.'

'And what do you propose to do at Geneva? They would not have you there; they would turn you out in three days. Come, we will go to your inn; I am curious to see the girl you have deceived. You can tell me your story afterwards.'

We went upstairs, into a miserable attic, where was a very young girl, tall, dark, handsome, and sprightly, who spoke proudly and without a trace of embarrassment.

'Are you the brother of this liar?' she said, 'this scoundrel who has deceived me?'

'Yes, fair lady, I have that honour.'

'Honour, forsooth! Then be good enough to send me back to Venice, for I won't stay any longer with that scoundrel I was fool enough to listen to, and whose fine stories turned my head. He was to find you at Milan, and there you would give us the money to take us to Geneva, where, he says, priests can marry by joining the Reformed Church. He swore you expected us, and would wait for us at Milan. Where he got the money to come on here with I do not know. Thank God, he has found you at last, otherwise I should have started to-morrow on foot begging my bread. He sold all my things at Bergamo and Verona. Cursed be the day I met him! Thank goodness, I have not listened to him! I have his promise of marriage in writing; you can put it in the fire if you like; but do send me back to Venice, or I swear I will walk there.'

My brother sat listening to this long tirade, his head in his hands. I felt at once that I was called on to take charge of the girl, who was a regular Venetian, bold and coura-

geous, as I like them, and I knew I should easily find some one to take her home.

'I promise to send you back to Venice,' I said, 'and in the company of some honest woman.'

'Remember,' interrupted the abbé in a plaintive voice, 'remember the oath you took to be always true to me; you swore it on the cross.' So saying, he advanced—to meet a sound box on the ear. He turned meekly away, and began to cry.

'My dear,' I said to the girl, 'you are a regular little devil; for my poor brother's misfortune is his love for you.'

'That is no fault of mine. It is not the first time I have boxed his ears; I began at Padua.'

'True,' said the young fool, 'but you are excommunicated for striking a priest.'

'What do I care for your excommunication! If you say a word, I'll give you another!'

'Calm yourself, my child,' I said; 'you are right to be indignant, but you must not strike him. Take up your bundle and follow me.'

'Where are you taking her?' said Jean.

'To my inn. You hold your tongue! Here are twenty sequins, buy some clothes, and give those rags to the poor. I will come and see you to-morrow. As for you, madame, I will send a chair for you, for you must not be seen in my company after having come here with a priest. I will put you in charge of my landlady.'

My brother's breath was taken away by the present of the twenty sequins, and he let us go without a word.

When Marcolina, as my brother's recalcitrant sweetheart was called, appeared before me in her fresh costume, I remained open-mouthed at her extraordinary beauty. She coolly asked Mlle. Crosin who she was in her blunt Venetian fashion.

'I am this gentleman's niece.'

'Then if I were his sister by marriage, you would be my

niece too! I should have liked to be called aunt by such a pretty girl!'

'How is Marcolina?' asked my brother next day.

'Do not be uneasy about her. She is well clothed, well lodged, and well fed. She is with our niece and her waiting-maid.'

'I did not know I had a niece.'

'You don't know everything. In three or four days Marcolina goes back to Venice.'

'Let me dine with you to-day?'

'Certainly not, and I forbid you to come to my inn; your presence would only distress that poor girl.'

'Well, I will follow her to Venice if I'.n hanged for it.'

'What will be the good? She hates you and beats you.'

'She will be as gentle as a lamb when she sees me in my fine clothes. But, tell me, if I let her return to Venice, and promise not to follow her, what will you do for me?'

'I will take you to Paris, and get you into the service of some bishop.'

'Good; take me to Paris, and I will go to our brother Francis, whose heart is not as hard as yours.'

'Very well, for the four or five days that we remain here you are not to leave this inn; you will be served with what you want to eat and drink. Our party will be a large one. I shall have with me, besides my niece and Marcolina, my secretary and my valet. We shall go by sea.'

I engaged a felucca to take us to Antibes, where we were to pass one night. My brother and a friend of his named Parsano met us at the boat, and we took provisions for three days. The little vessel was rowed by twelve men, and armed with two guns mounted on swivels and twenty-four muskets, so as to fight the corsairs if need be. Clairmont arranged my carriage and my trunks so skilfully that we were able to spread five mattresses. A serge awning covered the boat, from the poles of which he hung lanterns. Having warned my brother that I would have no nonsense, or I would throw him into the sea, I allowed him to sup with us.

The wind being contrary next day, we were obliged to row all the time, and the following night the sea became so stormy that I resolved to put into Mentone. My two pretty friends were ill; and as for my unfortunate brother, he could not hold his head up. We all went to the inn. The landlord told me the Prince and Princess of Monaco were at Mentone, and I decided to pay them a visit. I had not seen the prince for thirteen years. He was a bachelor in those days, but was now married, and father of two sons. He had married the Marquise de Brignoles, a great heiress. I was kept waiting a long time in the prince's ante-chamber; and when at last he appeared, he greeted me coldly, though I addressed him as 'your highness,' a title no one gave him in Paris.

'It was bad weather that drove you in here?' he asked.

'Yes, prince, and with your permission I shall spend a day in your delicious town.' (I thought it anything but delicious!)

'As you please; the princess and I both like it better than Monaco.'

'I hope your highness will present me to the princess.'

Without even mentioning my name, he ordered a page who was standing by to present me to his wife, and the page, opening the door of a large room, said, 'There is the princess.'

She was at her piano, singing, but rose on seeing me and came forward. I was obliged to announce myself, which is always disagreeable; but her manners were so elegant that she speedily overcame my embarrassment. She was beautiful, as I have said, affable, and talented. Her mother, who knew the prince well, and knew that he would not make her happy, had opposed the marriage, but was obliged to give way when her infatuated daughter said—

'*O Monaco o monaca*' ('Either Monaco or a convent').

We were talking on various subjects, when one of the waiting-maids ran into the room, laughing and screaming, the prince following close on her heels. The princess affected

not to see, and continued her conversation with me. I met the prince again as I was leaving, and he asked me to go and see them whenever I was at Mentone.

'Oh, certainly,' I answered, and without another word returned to my inn and ordered a good dinner for myself and my party. As we were sitting, a dandified young officer, with frizzled hair and smelling of musk, passed by; and seeing us through the open door, had the effrontery to ask if he might join us. I replied coldly that he would be doing us a great honour, which conventional phrase may be taken to mean either Yes or No; but a Frenchman who has made the first step will never turn back, and is not easily put out of countenance. After having shown off his airs and graces before the ladies, he said that he was surprised that the prince had not asked me to dinner with my amiable companions. I answered that I had not judged it necessary to mention them to him.

'Ah! now I understand! I am off at once to tell his highness of them, and I shall have the honour of dining with you all at the castle.'

We were still laughing at our self-invited guest and his impudence, when he reappeared, looking extremely pleased with himself. He transmitted to me a pressing request from the prince that I and my party would do him the pleasure of dining at the castle.

'I beg of you,' I answered, 'to make my excuses to his highness; and tell him that as the weather has become fine, we are going to profit by it, and leave as soon as we have made a hasty meal here.'

Our young Frenchman's face fell. He seemed deeply mortified, and left us with a low bow. Presently he returned to the charge; and addressing himself to the ladies, and completely ignoring my presence, he told them that he had given such a vivid description of their charms to the prince that the latter had determined to dine with *them!*

'At his behest,' said the bold-faced scoundrel, 'I have told the landlord to add two places at table, for I shall have the

honour to be of the party. In a quarter of an hour, ladies the prince will be here.'

'Very good,' said I, without a moment's hesitation; 'bu in order to receive the prince worthily, I must pay a visit t my felucca, and get a *pâté* I have there, which I know h will enjoy. Come, ladies.'

'You can leave them here, sir; I will keep them company.'

'Of course you would, but they also have some things t get from the boat.'

'Then may I come too?'

'With the greatest pleasure.'

I went on a little ahead, and meeting the landlord, I asked him what I owed him.

'Nothing, sir; I have just received orders to serve you with the best, and without charging you.'

'That is very handsome.'

We went aboard the felucca; and while the officer was engaged in examining some of my appointments, I told the captain, in a low voice, that I wanted to start there and then.

'But the abbé, and your secretary, and two of my men are ashore!'

'No matter; they will come along and find us at Antibes; it is only thirty miles off, and they have money. Be quick.'

He unhooked the chain, and the felucca drifted at once from the quay. The officer came up and asked me what it meant.

'It means,' said I, 'that I am going to Antibes, and that I will take you with me, gratis, with pleasure.'

'Capital! but you are, of course, only joking?'

'Not at all; your society will be most agreeable.'

'The deuce! Put me ashore, I beg you. Pardon me, ladies, but I haven't time to go to Antibes. Some other day I shall be charmed.'

'Put the gentleman ashore,' I said to the captain. 'Adieu, sir, and please thank the prince for having paid my hotel bill.'

The poor fellow stepped on to the quay, amid the laughter

and ironical farewells of my sprightly companions. It was evident that he was in some dread of the prince's anger. We arrived at Antibes about six in the evening, and the following day Parsano and my brother turned up just as we were sitting down to dinner. We were all curious to know what had happened after our departure, and Parsano spoke.

'When we got back from our walk,' he said, 'we were surprised not to find the felucca. We went to the inn, where I knew you had ordered dinner, but all the landlord could tell us was that he was expecting the prince and an officer to dine with you. Just as I was telling him that his expectations were vain, for the boat had gone, the prince and his friend arrived. The former told the landlord in a rage that as he had let you go, he could go after you for his money. "Your highness," said the landlord, "the gentleman wanted to pay me, but I had received orders from you to charge him nothing, and I respected them." At these words the prince flung him a louis with very bad grace. I told him that we belonged to your party, and that you had not waited for us either. He laughed, and said that after all it was a good joke. "You can tell Signor Casanova from me," he said, "that I shall meet him again some day, and shall not forget the trick he has played on me."

'The landlord, who is a good fellow, laughed heartily when the prince had gone, and gave us a good dinner, as well as the two boatmen, saying the prince's louis would settle it all. After dinner we hired horses and went on to Nice, where we slept, and here we are.'

From Antibes we went to Fréjus, Luc, Brignoles, and Aubagne, where we spent the last night before getting to Marseilles. By this time my 'niece' had become very dear to me, and I could not think of our approaching separation without shivering. But when we arrived in her native town I conducted her to the house of a friend, Madame Audibert.

It was at Madame Audibert's that my niece had first met la Croix. This lady was intelligent. She had been fond of my niece from her childhood. It was through her that we

hoped to Induce her father to forgive her. It was arranged that I was to see Madame Audibert alone, leaving my niece and Marcolina in the carriage, and I rapidly recounted Mlle. Crosin's misfortunes, and the happy chance which had brought her into my hands. I added that on the journey we had made the acquaintance of a rich and respectable young man, who was fully disposed to ask her hand in marriage within fifteen days.

'Go and bring her,' said Madame Audibert, 'and leave the whole affair to me.'

I made one bound to the carriage, and pulling her hood over her face, I gave my pretty charge into the arms of her friend. It was a delicious *coup de théâtre*. I wept from pleasure and regret. Clairmont brought up Mlle. Crosin's trunks, and I ordered the postillion to take me to the place where I had lodged before, and there I installed Marcolina.

We had visited the gambling-rooms at Antibes and San Remo; and Marcolina, beginning with twenty sequins I had given her, had come away with over a thousand ducats. I now gave her this money, which I had changed into gold. 'Take care of it,' said I, 'for a thousand ducats will gain you consideration in Venice. Do not weep, my angel, I leave my heart in your keeping, and to-morrow night I will come and sup with you.'

'It seems to me,' said Marcolina, 'that you travel for the express purpose of rescuing damsels in distress; but I notice that the said damsels must be pretty.'

'I am inclined to believe it,' I laughingly replied. 'It is certain that several women owe their happiness to me, and I cannot reproach myself positively with having caused the unhappiness of any one.'

'God will reward you, dear friend.'

If Marcolina's beauty and gentleness delighted me, so did her really excellent appetite. I have always had a weakness for women with good appetites. For the matter of that, with the exception of the poultry, which is not worth a straw, one finds excellent cheer at Marseilles, especially if one can

accommodate one's palate to the garlic which they put in everything, and which, employed in moderation, is a good stimulant.

Two days later, when I went to visit Parsano, I found him in bed, a doctor beside him.

'Are you ill? What is the matter with you?'

'Something which will teach me to be more careful in future.'

'You are an old fool. What effect do you suppose this will have upon the marquise?'

'I don't care a curse for the marquise. Let me alone.'

The scoundrel had never dared to speak to me in this tone before, and I thought it better not to notice it. I went up to my brother, who was in the corner.

'Why did you follow Marcolina home from the theatre yesterday?' said I.

'I went to remind her of her duty. I have ruined myself for her. I cannot return to Venice. I cannot live without her; you have taken her from me; what right had you to take her?'

'The right of love, animal! The right of the strongest. She would not leave me now.'

'You have dazzled her with your showy ways.'

'You would have allowed her to die of hunger and misery'.

'You will leave her as you have the others. I would have married her.

'Married her! renegade! and you a priest! As for me, I fancy I don't mean to part with her; but if I do, she will be very rich.'

'Do as you like, but at least I have a right to speak to her.'

'You have spoken to her for the last time, believe me.'

Saying so, I left the hotel, took a fly, and went off to find an advocate who would help me to get an abbé, a foreigner, arrested, a man who owed me money, although I had no documents to prove it.

'You can,' said the lawyer, 'have him arrested if you deposit a certain sum as guarantee. How much does he owe you?'

'Twelve louis.'

'Come with me to a magistrate, deposit the twelve louis; you can then have him watched, and it will be impossible for him to leave the hotel.'

As I did not wish to have a scandal in the place, I persuaded my brother to come with me, on pretence that I would take him to Marcolina. I took him to the Hôtel Saint Baume, and told him to wait. I then returned to the 'Thirteen cantons,' paid his bill, and took his baggage with me to the Hôtel Saint Baume. I told the landlord of the latter that I would be responsible for the abbé's bill, but only on condition that he did not allow him to leave the hotel. I had my gentleman safe.

'To-morrow,' said I, 'you will please to leave for Lyons, and thence for Paris. You will give me a paper acknowledging your debt to me, and I will give you twelve louis before you leave, and will tear up the paper as soon as you are *en route*.'

'I am obliged to do as you wish,' said he weeping, 'for you are stronger than I.'

I got rid of him so, but I came across him again in Paris a month later.

CHAPTER XXI

HENRIETTE AGAIN

THE day after my brother's departure, Mlle. Crosin's *fiancé* arrived; and Madame Audibert, the young man, and myself went solemnly to visit the parents of the *fiancée*, 'my niece.' I felt nervous, as I had not yet seen Madame Crosin; but the worthy father was prepared docilely to receive me as his cousin, the Chevalier de Seingalt, who had taken such care of their daughter on her travels. The wedding day was fixed; Marcolina was invited to be present, and we decided that she might with safety accept, more especially as it was she who now addressed me as uncle. Her toilette for the occasion was elegant, but simple. The wedding banquet interested me because of the affection I felt for the bride. I was absorbed in the consciousness of a good action performed, I was the author of a comedy carried to a successful termination. All things considered, I thought the world was the better for my existence, that although I had not been born a king I was yet able to promote the happiness of others. The bride wished to take Marcolina to Genoa with her, promising to send her on to Venice in charge of some trustworthy person, but my dear would not hear of this project. 'I shall not go to Venice,' she said to me, 'until you send me there of your own accord.'

The day after the wedding I began to make preparations for leaving Marseilles. I procured a letter of credit for Marcolina for the round sum of fifteen thousand francs, for I meant to send her back to Venice on the first good opportunity.

At five in the afternoon, when we were about a league from the *'Croix d'or,'* the shaft of my carriage broke, and

it was impossible for us to proceed until it was repaired. The only house in sight was a fine one on our right, with an avenue of beautiful trees leading up to it. Clairmont went there to ask the whereabouts of a blacksmith. By and by he returned accompanied by two servants, one of whom begged me, with his master's compliments, to repair to the château and wait there till the wheelwright had mended the chaise. I accepted; and leaving everything in the charge of my faithful Clairmont, set out for the house with Marcolina. Three ladies and two gentlemen came forward to meet us; and one of them, in courteous style, congratulated himself on our little *contretemps*, as it procured for 'madame' the pleasure of placing herself and her house at our service. I turned to the lady of the house and thanked her, and hoped I should not impose upon her for long. She curtsied gracefully, but I could not see her face, as the mistral was blowing keenly, and forced her and her companions to keep their hoods closely drawn. Marcolina's lovely head was bare and her hair blowing about in disorder. She only answered with smiles to the compliments paid her. One of the men asked me if she were my daughter. I answered she was my cousin, and we were both Venetians. A Frenchman is so eager to flatter a pretty woman, that he is quite careless of the susceptibilities of a third party. He could not possibly have imagined Marcolina to be my daughter; for though she was twenty years younger than I was, I am generally given ten years less than my age.

As we drew near the house a mastiff rushed by, chasing a spaniel. Madame, fearing he would hurt it, sprang forward to its rescue, made a false step, and slipped. When her companion raised her from the ground, she declared she had sprained her foot, and limped back to the house leaning on his arm. He returned after some moments' absence, and told us that the countess's foot was swollen and she had retired, but begged us to go up to her room. We found her in a magnificent bed in an alcove, darkened by heavy crimson satin hangings, and it was impossible to tell if she were

young or old, pretty or ugly. I, the indirect cause of her accident, was in despair, and told her so. She answered in good Italian that it was a trifling price to pay for the pleasure of entertaining us.

'Your ladyship must have lived in Venice to speak my language so correctly.'

'No, sir; but I have had very intimate friends who were Venetians.'

A servant just then came in to say that the wheelwright said it would take four hours to mend the shaft, and he must take the carriage to his workshop. The countess declared that in that case we must positively sup and sleep at her house. I accepted gratefully, and sent word to Clairmont to bring our trunks up to the château. The table was laid in the countess's room, and I hoped to get a sight of her face at supper, but was disappointed, as she declared she would not take anything. All the time we were eating, however, she chatted with Marcolina and myself, speaking our language with fluency. The words 'my late husband' escaped her, and I concluded she was a widow, but I did not dare to question her. When Clairmont was undressing me at night, he told me her married name, but I was not enlightened.

When the time came for us to retire, Marcolina declared that she was going to sleep with the countess, with whom her intimacy appeared to have progressed very rapidly. The countess seemed nothing loath, and agreed cordially.

I rose at daybreak, so as to hurry the wheelwright, and breakfasted in my carriage. When all was ready, I asked if the countess was visible. I was told that madame did not dare to receive me *en négligée;* but that she begged me, if I ever came that way again, to do her the honour of staying at her house, whether alone or in company. This politely veiled refusal gave me displeasure; but I concealed it, and expressing my thanks to the gentlemen, and giving a louis to each servant, I called Marcolina, and we departed.

I asked the Venetian girl how she liked the mysterious countess, and if she were young or old.

'She is simply charming,' she answered. 'She is thirty-three, and as beautiful as Mlle. Crosin. Look what she gave me!' and she showed me a superb diamond ring.

'But,' I said, 'I cannot understand why she would not let me see her face; it was treating me somewhat cavalierly.'

Marcolina now began to tease me, as usual, to take her to England. She confided to me that her uncle Matteo Bosè was footman to Monsignor Querini, the Venetian ambassador. To keep her quiet I promised to do so if possible.

We reached Avignon at sunset. I ordered supper, and fresh horses for five o'clock next morning. Marcolina, who hated spending the night on the road, was delighted that we were to stay at the inn.

'Are we at Avignon?' she asked.

'Yes, my dear.'

'Then it is time for me to fulfil my promise to the countess! She made me swear not to tell you till we reached Avignon.'

'My dear child, how interesting! Speak, I beg you.'

'She gave me a letter for you. Can you forgive me for having kept it so long?'

'Certainly, you gave your word; but where is the letter?'

'Wait.'

She drew from her pocket a big packet of papers, which she slowly sorted through.

'This is my certificate of birth.'

'I see you were born in 1746.'

'This is a certificate of morality.'

'Keep it; it may come in useful. Come! come! Where is the letter?'

'I hope I haven't lost it!'

'God forbid!'

'Here it is. No; this is the written promise of marriage your brother gave me.'

'You can put that in the fire. *Where* is the letter?'

'Ah, thank God! here it is.'

'Yes, thank God; but it has no address!'

My heart was beating wildly. I broke open the seal, and found written, in place of the address, these words in Italian:—

'To the noblest man I have ever known in my life.'

Could these words be addressed to me? I opened the sheet; inside, on a blank sheet of paper, was written—

'Henriette!' and not another word.

Io non mori, e non remasi vivo. Henriette! Yes, the note was in her very own style; it had the laconic eloquence peculiar to her. I remembered the last letter I had received from her—*'Adieu'*—and nothing more!

Henriette, whom I had loved so dearly, and whom, it seemed to me now, I loved more than ever!

'Henriette,' said I to myself, 'you saw me, cruel one, and you would not allow me to see you! You feared perhaps that you had lost some of your ancient charm, the beauty that sixteen years ago held me a willing victim? I love you still with all the strength of first love. Why did you not give me the pleasure of hearing from your own lips that you are happy? It is the only question I would have put to you, cruel one. I would not even have asked you if you love me still; for I know I am unworthy to be loved by you, I who have cared for so many women since I parted from you, the sweetest of your sex. Adorable and generous Henriette, I shall fly to you to-morrow, as you say your house is always open to me.'

But on maturer reflection, I concluded that she had tried to show me plainly that she did not wish to see me—not then, at any rate. I determined that I would respect her wishes; but, at the same time, I resolved not to die without seeing her again.

Poor Marcolina breathlessly watched the effect of her communication. I turned and embraced her with a strange fury.

'Dear friend,' she said at last, 'you frighten me! You

were as pale and motionless as a dead man. It lasted a full quarter of an hour. What is the matter with you? I was aware the countess knew you, but I did not imagine her name would have such an effect on you.'

'How do you know that we were once friends?'

'The countess told me so. She said if I wished to be always happy, I must never leave you; but, alas! I know that you want to send me away. I guess that you and she were once passionate lovers. Was it long ago?'

'Sixteen or seventeen years.'

'She must have been very young, but she could not have been more beautiful than she is now.'

'Marcolina, in pity, hold your tongue!'

'And how long did it last?'

'For four months of unclouded happiness.'

'I shall not be happy so long as that.'

'You will be happy for longer, dearest, but with another man nearer your own age. I must go to England to try and get my daughter out of her mother's hands.'

'You have a daughter! The countess asked me if you were married, and I said no.'

'You were right; yet when you see my daughter, you will know who her father is.'

From now on I did all I could to please Marcolina, for I felt the hour of separation was at hand. I was at the theatre with her one evening in company with Monsieur Buono and Madame Pernon, his mistress, when I saw Signor Querini, the Venetian ambassador to London, come into the box opposite ours. The procurator Morosini, Signor Memo, Count Stratico, both professors at the University of Padua, were with him. I knew all four gentlemen, and knew that they had returned from bearing the congratulations of their Government to George, the King of England. I went to pay them my respects.

Querini received me politely, and Memo somewhat restrainedly, for he remembered that his mother had had a share in the cabal which, eight years before, had led to my

imprisonment. I told them of my movements, and of how the Holy Father had made me a knight of his order, and how I was bound for London by way of Paris. As I was leaving the box, Morosini asked me to go and see him. 'For I have a little commission for you in London,' he said.

'I shall be delighted to undertake it for your Excellency,' I replied.

When I returned to my box I found Marcolina pallid with emotion, and during the remainder of the piece she kept her eyes fixed on Querini. While we were waiting for our carriage at the door of the theatre, the ambassadors came up, and Querini said: 'You have a charming young lady with you, Signor Casanova.'

Before I could answer, Marcolina seized his hand and kissed it.

'Why this honour to me, signorita?' he asked in astonishment.

'Because,' answered Marcolina in Venetian, 'I have the honour of knowing your Excellency.'

'And what are you doing with Signor Casanova?'

'He is my uncle.'

On returning to our hotel, Marcolina told me the reason of her extraordinary behaviour. She was afraid I should force her to return to Venice under the escort of her worthy uncle, who was butler to Querini, as she had told me.

'Don't cry,' I said; 'we have three or four days before us. Meantime, it was clever of you to kiss Querini's hand. All will go well, but don't cry. That simply kills me!'

The following day Morosini brought me a little sealed box, directed to my Lady Harrington, with a letter, and another letter containing these few words—

'The procurator Morosini is very sorry to have been obliged to leave without bidding farewell to Miss Charpillon.'

'But there is no address,' I objected. 'Where shall I find the lady?'

'I cannot say; if you do find her, give her the letter; if

not, so much the worse; and now I must tell you that I am charged by Signor Querini to invite you and your charming companion to dinner.'

'Shall we speak Venetian?' asked Marcolina.

'Most decidedly.'

'*E viva!* for I know I shall never learn French.'

She was delighted; and when Morosini had left, I told her that if by chance any one should speak of her returning to Venice, she was to say that there was only one person who could persuade her to do so. If Signor Querini would take her back under his high protection, she would go, not otherwise. I warned her, too, to ignore her Uncle Matthew, who would be sure to wait at table.

We presented ourselves at the ambassador's house. Marcolina wore her new dress, and I my richest suit; it was a coat of ash-coloured close-pile velvet, embroidered with gold and silver spangles, my ruffles and shirt front were in *point de l'aiguille*, and worth at least a thousand francs. What with my diamonds, my watches and chains, my sword, in beautiful English steel, my snuff-box set with fine diamonds, my cross and my shoe buckles, also in diamonds, I was worth at least fifty thousand crowns as I stood. This childish ostentation had its object. I wanted M. de Bragadin to hear that I was of importance in my world—the tyrants who had driven me into exile to know that I could afford to laugh at them.

After dinner, Signor Querini, who was excessively pious, saw fit to give us a little homily on Love, which he said could be classed under five heads—love of one's neighbour, love of God, conjugal love, family love, and self-love. He was particularly eloquent on love of God, and I was much surprised to see Marcolina shedding abundant tears, which she wiped away furtively as though to hide them from the good old man, whose piety had been aggravated by the wine he had drunk. Indeed I had never appreciated Marcolina till that day. She told me when we got home that she had simulated emotion so as to completely captivate the old

ambassador, and that had she followed her instincts she would have laughed like a mad woman. She was made for the stage—the stage or the throne; there is not much difference between them.

I kissed her and said, 'Dearest, I find out how sweet you are—just when I am going to lose you!'

'Keep me, then, dear Casanova, and I will always be as gay as I was to-day. By the way, did you see my uncle? I am sure he recognised me. You will see, to-morrow he will tell Querini that I am his niece, and consequently not yours.'

'Then you must admit to Querini that it is true, and that the tie which unites us is an infinitely more tender one than mere relationship. At the same time, you must make your uncle feel that he has no rights of control over you, and that if you return it must be entirely of your own free will, and with Querini.'

It all came about as Marcolina had foreseen. I received a note from Signor Querini asking me to see him.

'Signor Casanova,' he said, 'I have something to say to you; but first of all, I want you to confide in me. Have you known the young person who is with you long, for no one here believes you to be her uncle? How did she come into your hands?'

'As that is a point which concerns her alone, you must allow me not to answer that question.'

'Has she told you her real name?'

'She told me her parents were poor, but honest. I was not curious enough to ask their name.'

'I can tell it you then; she is the niece of my butler. Her mother, who is his sister, wrote to him while I was in London that her daughter had left the paternal roof. Her arrogance the other day made me think he must be mistaken, but now I know otherwise. Tell me, is she your wife, or do you intend to marry her?'

'I love her passionately, but I cannot marry her.'

'Then, do you object to her returning to Venice with her own uncle?'

'As her lover I would defend her against violence or coercion; but as she has inspired your excellency with such a lively interest, I bow to fate. If she chooses to return with you, I shall not oppose her so doing.'

"Then let us consider the matter settled. I beg you to dine with us to-morrow; I will find an opportunity of presenting Marcolina to her real uncle.'

We went, Marcolina as sprightly as ever. A few moments before dinner was announced, the butler came and presented Signor Querini with his spectacles on a silver tray. Marcolina fixed an astonished gaze on him, and exclaimed—

'My uncle!'

'My dear niece!'

She flung herself into his arms and played her little scene admirably.

'You will tell me of Venice,' she said. 'I am so glad to see you, and you see I am happy. But where were you the other day?'

'Here.'

'And you did not recognise me?'

'Yes, I did; but your other uncle, who is here now——'

'My dear cousin,' said I, laughing, 'let us shake hands and recognise each other. Marcolina, I congratulate you on having such a nice uncle.'

'O happy hour!' exclaimed Signor Querini.

'Exquisite! exquisite!' echoed the others.

The newly found uncle went off, and we sat down to table. Marcolina's face wore an expression of mingled regret and happiness—regret at leaving me, happiness at the idea of going home. Later on she told Querini roundly that much as she esteemed her Uncle Matthew, it was in his protection and his only that she would travel to Venice. He was afraid to compromise himself by agreeing too eagerly, and thus endangering his pose of excessive piety.

Every one felt awkward, and looked it, but Marcolina. It was not until dessert was put on the table by the trembling

hands of the uncle that this extraordinary girl said, as if to herself, but loud enough for all to hear—

'We must all worship Divine Providence, though few of us can do so blindly, for I defy any one to judge beforehand of the results for good or evil of His interference!'

M. Querini asked her to explain herself.

'I was thinking, and my thoughts were inspired. As the result of my self-examination, I came to the conclusion that my present happiness is the direct consequence of error—the greatest possible error into which a young woman can fall! I find in that a fit cause of humiliation and submission to the decrees of Providence.'

'But, my dear child, you must repent.'

'That is what puzzles me, for I cannot see any cause for repentance, since all has turned out for the best. I must ask some learned doctor.'

'Never mind that, my dear, I will take upon myself to show you the road of repentance as we travel to Venice. I will tell you what I will do,' went on Querini, hopelessly fascinated by Marcolina's witching ways. 'My housekeeper, Dame Veneranda, shall take charge of you. You shall sleep with her if you like. Come, let us go and interview her. Casanova, you come too!'

Veneranda was a lady of more than canonical age, but of sensible appearance and good manners. She assured me she would take every care of the young lady.

'I must tell the butler to see about another carriage,' said Querini; 'the calêche only holds two.'

'Your excellence,' said I, 'Marcolina has her own carriage, in which Madame Veneranda will find plenty of room for herself and her trunks.'

I discussed my plan of making my fortune through Lord Egremont in England, and M. Morosini promised me a letter for him. Then Marcolina and I returned to our hotel to get her baggage, and I flung myself on my bed, weeping bitterly. She was more reasonable than I.

'Remember,' she said, 'I am not leaving you; it is you

who are sending me away. You have but to say one word, and this comedy will have no *dénouement*.'

It was true; but the fatality which ever attended me, the dread perhaps of a lasting tie, or my libertine spirit, which turned ever, in spite of myself, towards new loves and new pleasures, prevented me from saying that word, and made me persist in my resolution. I cannot describe our last hours together. She kept asking me how I could bear to be thus my own executioner and hers; and I could give her no satisfactory answer, for I knew no more than she did, save that some occult power prompted me to this gloomy course. Next day they started. Although Marcolina had my carriage, Querini made a wry face when he saw her vast number of boxes being piled on it. I went with them as far as Pont de Beauvoisin, where we stopped. Marcolina slept with Dame Veneranda, and I passed the whole night sitting on a chair, with my head on the pillow beside Marcolina's. After the long night of tears I rose, had my horse saddled, and after placing Marcolina in her carriage, embraced her once more, and rode off. I did not see her again for eleven years.

I rode for six hours without stopping; then, worn out with fatigue, I returned to my hotel. I flung myself dressed on my bed, thinking it would be impossible for me to close my eyes, but in ten minutes I was asleep, and slept for nineteen hours. When Clairmont came in answer to my bell, I ordered him to bring me meat and wine, which I greedily devoured; then falling back, I slept again heavily till the following afternoon, when I awoke, refreshed, and able to take some interest in life.

Three days later, having bought a good two-wheeled carriage mounted on springs, of the kind called an Amadis, I started on my long trip to Calais and England in my dressing-gown and night-cap; my trunks I sent by diligence. It seemed to me that by travelling in this *déshabillé*, and a prey to utter loneliness, I was paying some kind of tribute to my dear Marcolina.

CHAPTER XXII

ENGLAND

A FOREIGNER landing on English soil must cultivate resignation. The custom-house inspection is a trial. The officials are indiscreet and impertinent; but I was forced to submit; what would have been the use of resisting? The average Englishman, strong in the rights the law affords him, and careful not to do anything the law forbids him, is brusque, rough, and ill-conditioned, the officials particularly so, and not to be compared with the French, who know how to be polite in the exercise of their functions. Nothing in England is as it is anywhere else. The very ground is of another colour, and the water of the Thames tastes differently to that of any other river. Everything in Albion has a character of its own; the fish, the horned cattle, the men and the women are distinct types, to be found nowhere else. Their mode of life, especially with regard to cookery, is totally unlike that of other people.

The main characteristic of these proud islanders is their national pride, which puts them in their own estimation far ahead of all other races. It is only fair, however, to say that this fault is not confined to them; each country places itself in the first rank; the classification of the second rank alone presents any difficulty. What most struck me was the general air of cleanliness, the beauty of the country, its high state of cultivation, the solidity of the food, the excellence of the roads, the coaches and post-chaises, and the modest tariff of the latter. Above all, I admired the perfect ease with which one could pay for everything with a mere scrap of paper. The swiftness of the horses, though they never go at anything but a trot, delighted me, and so did the architecture of

towns like Dover and London, Canterbury and Rochester, populous cities that might be figured by immense lengths of tubing, for they are very long and very narrow.

We got to London in the evening and I immediately went forth to explore the city, taking care not to lose my bearings.

It was about seven o'clock. I saw a lot of people in a coffee-house, and I went in. It was the most ill-famed coffee-house in London, and the meeting-place of the scum of the Italian population. I had been told of it at Lyons, and had made up my mind never to go there; but chance often makes us turn to the left when we want to go to the right. I ordered some lemonade, and was drinking it, when a stranger who was seated near me took a news-sheet from his pocket, printed in Italian. He began to make corrections in pencil on the margin, which led me to suppose he was an author. I watched him out of curiosity, and noticed that he scratched out the word *ancora*, and wrote it at the side, *anchora*. This barbarism irritated me. I told him that for four centuries it had been written without an *h*.

'I agree with you,' he answered, 'but I am quoting Boccaccio, and in quotations one must be exact.'

'I humbly beg your pardon; I see you are a man of letters'.

'A very modest one; my name is Martinelli.'

'I know you by reputation; you are a cousin of Calsabigi's, who has spoken of you; I have read some of your satires.'

'May I ask to whom I have the honour of speaking?'

'My name is Seingalt. Have you finished your edition of the *Décameron*?'

'I am still working at it, and trying to get more subscribers.'

'Will you allow me to be among the number?'

He put me down for four copies, at a guinea a copy, and was surprised to hear I had only been in London an hour.

'Let me see you home,' he said; 'you will lose your way else.'

When we were outside he told me I had been in the

Orange Coffee-house, the most disreputable in all London.

'But you go.'

'I go because I know the company and am on my guard against it.'

'Do you know many people here?'

'Yes, but I only pay court to Lord Spencer. I work at literature, am all alone, earn enough for my wants. I live in furnished lodgings, I own twelve shirts and the clothes I stand up in, and I am perfectly contented.'

This man pleased me; he talked pure Tuscan, and there was something very honest about him. I asked him how to settle myself comfortably. When he knew how long I was going to stay and the style in which I wished to live, he advised me to take a furnished house.

'Where can I find a house of this kind?'

We went into a shop, where he borrowed the *Advertiser*, and noted down sundry addresses. We were nearest at the moment to one in Pall Mall. An old woman opened the door and showed us the ground floor and three upper stories. Each story had two rooms to the front, and a lavatory behind (in London every floor has this accessory). Everything was scrupulously clean—linen, furniture, carpets, mirrors, porcelain, even the bells and the locks on the doors. One great cupboard was filled with linen, another with silver, and china and earthenware dinner-services. In the kitchen were rows of shining pots and pans. In a word, it was *comfortable*. The price was twenty guineas a week; and as it is useless to bargain in London, I told Martinelli I would take it there and then.

The old woman said that if I would keep her as housekeeper, I need not trouble about references, as I could pay her a week in advance. I told her I would do so if she would undertake to find me a servant who could speak French or Italian as well as English, and I paid her a month in advance. She made the receipt out in the name of the Chevalier de Seingalt. I was never called anything else in London.

Thus in less than two hours I had found a perfectly

equipped home in the city which people say is a chaos, especially for foreigners. But in London money buys everything.

I was soon installed in my new house, and I went to call on Signor Zuccato, the Venetian envoy, with Morosini's mysterious letter. He told me coldly he was glad to know me. I asked him to introduce me at Court, but he only replied with a smile, in which I fancied I detected contempt. I paid the insolent aristocrat back in his own coin. I bowed distantly and went away, never to set foot in his house again. I had no better luck with Lord Egremont, who was ill, and who died a day or two after I presented my letter of introduction from Morosini to him. I had another letter from Chauvelin for the Comte de Guerchy, the French ambassador. He received me most cordially, invited me to dine, and promised to present me at Court the following Sunday after divine service. It was at his table that I met the Chevalier d'Eon, secretary to the embassy, and of whom, a little later, all Europe was talking. The Chevalier d'Eon was a beautiful woman, who, before adopting the career of diplomacy, had been a barrister, and then a captain of dragoons. She served Louis Quinze as a valiant soldier, and a consummately skilful diplomatist. In spite of her manly intellect and airs, I had not been a quarter of an hour in her company before I knew her for a woman. Her shape was too rounded for that of a man, and her voice was too clear.

During these first few days I made the acquaintance of all the bankers with whom my money was deposited (I had in all more than three hundred thousand francs). I visited the theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane incognito. I did not enjoy myself much, as I did not know a word of English. I dined in all the taverns of good or evil repute, so as to familiarise myself with the manners of these 'great little' islanders. In the mornings I went to the Stock Exchange, where I made many acquaintances, one of whom found me a negro servant who could speak French, English,

and Italian, and a good English man cook, who spoke French.

In the evening I frequented the most select bagnios where a man of quality can sup, bathe, and meet well-bred women of easy virtue. There are plenty of this sort in London. This entertainment only costs about six guineas, and with economy one can do it for four; but economy was never one of my failings.

On Sunday morning I dressed myself elegantly and richly, and went to Court about eleven o'clock, where I met M. de Guerchy, as arranged. He presented me to his Majesty George the Third, who spoke to me, but so low that I could not understand him, and could only reply by an inclination of the head. The queen also spoke to me, and I was delighted to see the silly envoy of my own dear republic standing near her. When Monsieur de Guerchy announced me as the Chevalier de Seingalt, I saw him start and look astonished, for in the letter of introduction to him I was only spoken of as Casanova. The queen asked what part of France I came from, and when I said I was a Venetian, she looked at him. Zuccato bowed, as much as to say he could not contradict this. Her Majesty asked me if I knew the ambassadors who had been over here to congratulate the king? I answered I knew some of them intimately.

'M. de Querini,' the queen was good enough to say, 'made me laugh. He said I was a little devil!'

'He meant angel, madam.'

I wished she would ask me why Zuccato had not presented me, for I had an answer on the tip of my tongue that would have prevented my lord from sleeping for a week, but the talk was vague and purposeless, as it always is in courts.

I had a letter of introduction to Lady Harrington who was lodged within the precincts of the Court, and received every Sunday. Card play went on at her house on that day, for the park comes under the royal jurisdiction. It is forbidden everywhere else to gamble or make music on Sun-

days. Spies infest the streets of London, and listen outside private houses to the various sounds issuing from the parlours. If, from what they hear, they think that gambling or singing is going on, they wait till a door opens, and then slip in and arrest the bad Christians who dare to profane the Lord's day by an amusement which in all other countries is considered innocent enough. On the other hand, Englishmen are free to keep the day holy in taverns and houses of ill-fame, both of which abound in this capital.

I was shown into a room full of people, thirty at least, among which it was easy to distinguish the hostess by the air of welcome she assumed when I was announced. She told me she had seen me at Court, and without knowing who I was, had felt a desire to become acquainted with me. She was then about forty years old, but was still beautiful; she was a leader of society, and renowned for her many gallantries. She introduced me to her husband and to her four daughters, all grown up, and all charming. She asked why I had come to London at the time of year when every one was leaving it for the country?

I told her that I always acted on impulse, and could give her no better answer; but I intended to remain a year in England. I ventured to hope that what was deferred was not necessarily lost.

My answer seemed to please her, for it was English in its independence; and she kindly told me I could count on her doing everything she could to make my sojourn agreeable. 'You must begin with seeing all the nobility at Madam Cornelys's, in Soho Square,' she said; 'there is a reception there on Thursday. I can give you a ticket for the ball and supper; here it is; it costs a mere two guineas.'

I gave her the money, and she wrote across the ticket, '*Paid. Harrington.*'

'Is this formality indispensable, my lady?'

'Yes, or you would be asked to pay at the door.'

While she was arranging a whist table, she asked me if I had introductions to any other ladies.

'One, of a rather singular nature, which I intend to present to-morrow; it is the portrait of the person herself.'

'Can I see it?'

'Certainly; here it is.' I showed her a miniature Lord Percy had given me.

'Why, it is the Duchess of Northumberland. She is here this afternoon; over there, in pink with curly hair. Let us go and give it to her.'

She led me across the room.

'Dear duchess,' she said, 'here is a gentleman who has a letter for you.'

'Ah, yes; it is Monsieur de Seingalt. I am delighted to see you, chevalier; my son has written to me about you. I hope you will come and see me; I receive three times a week.'

'Then I will do myself the honour of handing the precious letter to you at your own house.'

We played whist for small stakes, and I lost fifteen guineas. Lady Harrington drew me to one side and gave me a little lesson, which I think worthy of being repeated here.

'You lost,' she said, 'and you paid your losses in gold. I suppose you had no bank notes.'

'Pardon me, my lady; I have one of fifty and one of a hundred pounds.'

'You should have changed one, then, or paid some other day. It is considered a mark of bad breeding here to pay in *sounding* money. In a foreigner, of course, it is excusable, but don't let it happen again. You saw the lady smile when you gave her your guineas.'

'Yes; who is she?'

'Lady Coventry, the sister of the Duchess of Hamilton.'

'Ought I to offer her my excuses?'

'No; the offence is not of such a serious nature as that. She may have been surprised, but not offended, for she is the gainer by fifteen shillings.'

This little bit of provincialism on my part was vexatious,

for Lady Coventry was a piquante brunette. However, I soon forgot my vexation.

I dined in my own house next day, and was well pleased with my English cook, who knew how to serve French *plats* as well as the usual English ones, and sent me up 'poulardes,' 'fricandeaux,' 'ragoûts,' and, above all, the good French soup, which of itself is enough to do a nation honour, had it no other claim.

But I was not contented. I was alone, and nature had not made me for a hermit. I had neither mistress nor friend. In London one can invite a chance acquaintance to dine at a tavern, where each pays his share, but not to one's own house. I remember a younger son of the Duke of Beaufort's asking me one day to have some oysters with him. He ordered the oysters and a bottle of champagne; but when we had a second one, he made me pay half its price. This is the style across the Channel!

Everybody laughed at me when I said I ate at home because they did not give me any soup at the taverns.

'But are you ill?' they said; 'broth is only for invalids!' The Englishman is carnivorous; he eats hardly any bread, and thinks himself economical because he orders neither soup nor dessert. So, to my mind, an English dinner has no beginning and no end.

Soup is considered a great expense, because even the servants will not eat the meat it is made from; they call it fit to be thrown to the dogs. I must admit that the salt beef which takes the place of the French *bouilli* is excellent. I cannot say as much for the beer, which I could not use myself; it is bitter and undrinkable. As *vin ordinaire*, the English drink a Portuguese variety, a kind of sweet piquette that gave me a stomachache. My wine merchant supplied me with excellent French wines, very pure, but very dear.

I went with Martinelli to the British Museum, where I met Dr. Mati, and in the evening to Drury Lane Theatre, where I was given a sample of the somewhat boisterous manners of this insular population. I forget the name of

the piece announced for that evening, but for some reason it was impossible to give it. The celebrated actor, Garrick, who twenty years later was buried at Westminster, came forward to explain matters to the public, but he could not calm them. They pelted him with apples and dirt. There was a cry of 'Clear the theatre.' The king, the queen, and the respectable portion of the audience made off in a hurry; in less than an hour everything inside the building was wrecked, only the four walls were left standing. The sovereign people destroyed everything it could lay hands on, just to show its sovereign power; then, satisfied with its work, went off to swill beer and gin.

About a fortnight later, when the theatre was reopened, Garrick appeared before the curtain to beg the indulgence of the spectators. Before he could utter a word, a voice from the pit cried out, 'On your knees!' A thousand voices took up the cry, 'On your knees,' and the Roscius of England was obliged to ask pardon, in this humiliating position, of the scum of the London slums. Thunders of applause told him the pardon was granted, and there was an end of the matter. The English people are like this, and, above all, the people of London; they scoff and hoot at king, queen, and princes when the fancy takes them; and for this very reason royal personages are careful not to show themselves, except on great occasions and surrounded by hundreds of constables.

I was walking in St. James's Park one day with Lord Augustus Hervey when we met a gentleman, who stopped us and remained talking to Hervey for some minutes. I asked him who it was.

'That is the brother of Lord Ferrers,' he said, 'who had his head cut off about a couple of months ago for killing one of his servants.'

'And you speak to him?'

'Why not?'

'Isn't he disgraced by the shameful death of his relation?'

'Disgraced! What an idea! Lord Ferrers himself was not *disgraced*. He violated the law, and he has paid for it with

his life, so he owes society nothing. He was an honourable man who played a high game and lost. I do not know if, according to our constitution, there be any punishment which is disgraceful. I am free to break the law if I am disposed to suffer the penalty. It sounds absurd, I own, but it is a thing we are very particular about, for we are free to choose. We do consider it disgraceful if the criminal, to escape his chastisement, does anything cowardly or mean, or unworthy of a gentleman.'

'As, for instance?'

'Beg the king to forgive him, or ask pardon of the people?'

'Or run away?'

'No; to run away takes a good deal of courage, for it is a further transgression of the law. A man must have physical and moral courage to conceive the plan of flight. Your escape from the tyranny of your magistrates does you honour; your escape from "The Leads" was an act of virtue.'

'What is your opinion of highway robbers?'

'I detest them, for they are dangerous to society; but I pity them when I think that they must always have the fear of the gallows present to their minds. Supposing,' he continued, 'you took a coach to visit a friend some three or four miles out of London, and suddenly a man jumped on the step of the carriage, and putting a pistol to your breast demanded your money or your life, what would you do?'

'If I had a pistol handy, I would blow out his brains; if not, I would hand him my purse, and tell him he was an infamous assassin.'

'You would be wrong in both cases. If you killed him, you would be hanged, for no one has the right to take the life of an Englishman. If you called him an infamous assassin, he would tell you you were a liar, for he had given you a chance of defending yourself by attacking you in front. But, as you handed him your purse, you might gently remonstrate with him on his villainous calling, and he would

probably agree with you, and tell you that he meant to change it as soon as possible. He would then thank you, and advise you in future not to travel outside of London without a mounted man-servant. We English are aware of the existence of these vermin; and when we travel we take two purses with us—a little one for the robbers, and another for ourselves.'

He was a philosopher, and a faithful British subject!

The night before the assembly in Soho Square, I dined with Martinelli, and he spoke of Madam Cornelys, who, he said, was so heavily in debt that she only dared go out on a Sunday—the one day in the week when creditors have no right to arrest their debtors.

'Her needless extravagance,' he said, 'keeps her in continual distress, and sooner or later she will find herself at bay. She owes four times more than she is worth, including her house, the possession of which is doubtful, as there is a law-suit about it.'

I went in my finest clothes to the assembly, and the secretary, who sat at the entrance, took my ticket and wrote down my name. As soon as Madam Cornelys caught sight of me, she came forward to welcome me, saying how delighted she was to see that I had come in with a ticket.

'You might have known I should not come on any other terms,' I said; 'and also, that having the *entrée* to the Court, it was only necessary for me to pay my two guineas. I only regret, for the sake of our old friendship, that I did not pay them to you personally.'

This speech embarrassed her, but Lady Harrington, who was one of her principal patronesses, came to her assistance.

'My dear Cornelys,' she said, 'I have a great many guineas to hand over to you, among them two from M. de Seingalt, who, I fancy, is an old acquaintance of yours. I did not dare to ask him about it, though,' she added, glancing mischievously at me.

'Why not, my lady? I have had the honour of knowing Madam Cornelys for many years.'

'I can quite believe it,' she said, laughing, 'and I congratulate both of you. I suppose, chevalier, that you also know the amiable Miss Sophie?'

'Naturally, who knows the mother must know the daughter.'

'Yes, yes, I understand.'

Sophie was standing by, and Lady Harrington, after embracing her affectionately, said: 'If you love yourself, you must love her, for she is your very image.'

'One of the little tricks nature plays on us,' I said.

'Certainly, but you must own she has managed it very well this time.'

So saying, she took my arm, and holding Sophie by the hand, she led us through the crowd, and I had to endure a thousand questions from people I had never seen.

'Why, here is the husband of Madam Cornelys.'

'Here comes Mr. Cornelys!'

'This must be Mr. Cornelys!'

'No, no, no,' laughed Lady Harrington continually.

It began to annoy me, for the cause of this persecution was the likeness between the child and myself. I asked my lady to let Sophie go back to her mother, but she was too much amused to listen to me.

'Stay by me,' she insisted, 'and I will tell you who everybody is.'

We sat down, and by and by up came La Cornelys to pay her court. Every one turned to her and repeated the questions which had annoyed me so much.

She took her stand very boldly, declaring that I was her oldest and her best friend, and that it was not without reason that her daughter resembled me. Then, when the laughter had somewhat died away, and doubtless to change the subject, she said that Sophie had been learning the minuet and danced it to perfection.

'Come, then,' said Lady Harrington, 'send for a violin, and let us admire the pretty little virtuosa.'

We were in a private sitting-room, and the ball had not

yet begun, so, as soon as the violin appeared, I took the child by the hand, and we danced the minuet, to the admiration of the beholders.

The ball lasted all night; people went in troops to eat and drink at all hours; there was a most princely waste and profusion. I made the acquaintance of all the nobility and all the royal family, which was there in full force, with the exception of the king and queen and the Prince of Wales. La Cornelys must have taken more than twelve hundred guineas, but the outlay was enormous; there was no saving, and not even the most ordinary precautions taken against theft. I felt really sorry for her. I was so tired when I got home that I spent the whole day in bed.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE LODGER

Lord Pembroke [1] had advised me to dine at the Star Tavern, if I wanted to see the prettiest women in London; so relying on his recommendation I went there. The landlord came and talked to me in French, and I was much impressed by his gravity and circumspection, and said I thought Lord Pembroke had misled me when he had told me that a pleasant *convive* was included in the *menu*.

'Not at all, sir,' said he; 'if you want somebody to dine with you you have only to say so.'

He called to the waiter, and told him to go and fetch a girl, exactly as though he was telling him to fetch a bottle of champagne.

The man went off, and returned in a few minutes with a young person whose appearance did not please me.

'Give her a shilling, then, and send her about her business. We don't stand on ceremony here in London.'

I gave her a shilling. The next was worse, and I dis-

[1] Henry Herbert, tenth Earl of Pembroke, and seventh of Montgomery (1734-1794), eldest son of Henry, ninth earl, by Mary, eldest daughter of Richard, Viscount Fitzwilliam, in the peerage of Ireland. Was appointed cornet in his father's regiment of dragoon guards, 1752. On the formation of Elliott's Light Horse (now 15th Hussars) Herbert was appointed lieutenant-colonel. He took the regiment out to Germany in 1760, but appears to have had no share in the brilliant achievements of the regiment. He commanded the cavalry brigade under Lord Granby in 1760-1761. Returning to England he resumed his court duties as Lord of the Bedchamber to George II., and in 1762 published his *Method of Breaking Horses*, on which is based the system since generally adopted in the British cavalry. In 1762 he caused a great scandal by throwing up his place at court and eloping, in a packet-boat, with the daughter of Charles Ormsby Hunter, a Lord of the Ad-

missed her too, and ten others who came after her. The landlord was much amused at my fastidiousness.

'Don't bring any more,' I cried at last; 'I will dine by myself,' which I did; and afterwards went for a walk in St. James's Park, and thence alone in a carriage to Ranelagh. It was the first time I had been to that place of amusement. I had tea in the rotunda, and danced several minuets, but made no acquaintances, though I saw many pretty women. I found myself leading a very boring existence. I was alone, and had no one to share my home and my table, and this though I had been six weeks in London! Such a thing had never befallen me before. How was I to find in that great city a woman to my mind, and who would resemble, in character at least, some one of those whom I had so tenderly loved? As I was turning all this over in my mind, an extraordinary idea occurred to me.

I called my old housekeeper, and told her I wanted to let the second or third story of my house, for the sake of having a companion, and that, though she was my servant, I would give her half a guinea a week for the extra trouble. She was to put up the following notice in the window:—

'Second or third story to be let furnished, cheap, to a young lady, alone, without encumbrances, speaking English and French, and receiving no visitors.'

The old woman, who knew a thing or two, and had not been a saint in her youth, was like to choke with laughter.

miralty (v. *Walpole's Letters*). He afterwards returned to his wife, and Miss Hunter, who had a child by him, it is said, married Sir Alured Clarke. Lord Pembroke was restored to favour at court, and in January 1779 he entertained George the Third and Queen Charlotte with great splendour at Wilton House. He was eventually made Governor of Portsmouth, and died in 1794. 'I almost wish I could stop here, and not relate the cruel story I am going to tell you. Lord Pembroke, Lord of the Bedchamber, Major-General, owner of Wilton House, husband of one of the most beautiful creatures in England, father of one son, himself only twenty-eight, is gone off with Miss Hunter, a handsome girl with a fine person, but silly, and in no degree lovely as his own wife.'—*Walpole to Sir Horace Mann.*

'What are you laughing at, my good woman? Do you think no one will take the rooms?'

'The other way round. I shall have a crowd here from morning to night, but Fanny can attend to them. Just tell me how much I am to ask?'

'I will settle that with the young woman herself. There will not be so very many, as I say, "*speaking English and French.*" Furthermore, my lodger must be young and respectable, as I will have no visitors, not even her father and mother.'

'But there will be always a crowd round the door to read the notice.'

'That does not matter; a little singularity does no harm.'

As the old housekeeper had foreseen, as soon as the notice was up, every one stopped to read and comment on it. The second day, my negro servant, Jarbe, told me my notice had been reproduced in the *St. James's Chronicle* with satirical comments. I sent for the paper, and Fanny translated it to me as follows:—

'The owner of the second and third floors probably occupies the first himself. He must be a man of pleasure and taste, for he desires a young lodger, alone and without encumbrances. As she is to receive no visitors, it is to be supposed he means to keep her company. It is to be feared, however, that the landlord gets the worst of the bargain, as the young lady may only take the rooms to sleep in, or to go to from time to time; it is even possible that she may refuse to receive her landlord.'

English news-sheets are the most entertaining things in the world. Everything that goes on is freely discussed. The journalists here have a knack of making the simplest things interesting. Happy the people in whose country one can say everything and write everything!

I will not describe the hundred and one young women who presented themselves during the first ten days, to all of whom I refused to let, on some pretext or other, though many of them were not lacking in grace and beauty.

On the eleventh day, as I was sitting down to dinner, a young woman, of from twenty to twenty-four years old, presented herself. She was above the average height, dressed without pretension, but tastefully and decently. Her face was proud, gentle, and serious; her features regular; her complexion pale; and her beautiful hair jet black.

She made me a respectful courtesy, and as I rose to return her salutation, begged me to be seated and to continue my dinner in a manner and tone which showed she was accustomed to good society. I offered her a chair and pressed her to partake of some preserves which were on the table, but she refused them in a way which was absolutely charming. She spoke, at first, in good French, which she afterwards changed to perfect Italian, without the slightest accent. She would like to rent the room on the third story, she said, and hoped I would accept her as a lodger, as she was ready to fulfil all my conditions.

'You are at liberty to use only one room, if it suits you, mademoiselle,' I said, 'but the whole floor is at your disposition.'

'The whole floor would be too expensive for me,' she answered, 'for though in your advertisement you say the rent is cheap, I can only afford two shillings a week for my lodging.'

'That is precisely what I ask for the apartments. So you see we shall not fall out on that point. My maid will wait on you, and buy your provisions for you; she will also wash your linen for you and run your errands.'

'In that case, I can dismiss my servant,' she said, 'and I shall be glad to do so, for she robs me—not seriously, it is true, but more than befits my purse. I will tell yours what I can spend on my food, and I will give her sixpence a week for her trouble.'

'She will be very pleased, but you had better make an arrangement with my cook's wife, who is a very respectable woman, and who could give you your dinner and supper for less than you could have it sent in for.'

'I hardly think so, for I am ashamed to tell you how little I have to spend.'

'If you only wish to spend a penny a day, I will tell her to give you a pennyworth; at the same time I advise you to take what she sends up from the kitchen, and not be uneasy about the cost of it, for she has orders always to provide for four persons, though I am generally alone. Whatever you give her will be pure profit to her. I will simply tell her to look after you, and I hope you will not be offended at my doing so.'

'You are very generous, sir, and the whole arrangement is very extraordinary.'

'If you will wait a moment you will see how easily everything can be settled.'

I rang for the maid and the cook's wife.

'What would you charge this young lady for her dinner and supper every day? She wishes to live very simply.'

'I would charge her very little, sir, for there is always a great deal left over.'

'I can only afford to spend threepence a day.'

'Very well, miss, I will manage to satisfy you for threepence a day.'

I ordered the placard to be taken down and the room to be arranged as comfortably as possible.

When the servants had withdrawn, the young lady told me she never went out, except on Sunday, when she attended Mass at the Bavarian minister's chapel, and once a month to draw her allowance of three guineas. She begged me never to introduce any one to her, and to tell my servants if any one inquired for her to say they knew no such person. I promised everything, and she left me, saying she would return with her trunk.

The old housekeeper told me she had paid a week in advance, and had gone away in a sedan chair, as she had come. The good old woman thought it necessary to sound a note of warning.

'Nonsense,' said I. 'If I fall in love with her, so much the better. What name did she give you?'

'Miss Pauline. I noticed that she was quite pale when she came, but she has gone away as red as a turkeycock.'

I was filled with joyful anticipations. I wanted some one to care for, some one whose moral qualities should equal her beauty. As for her not caring for me, I must confess, the thought did not disturb me. What woman can resist a man bent on her conquest?

When I came home from the play, the maid told me Miss Pauline had chosen a small dressing-room at the back of the house only fit for a servant; that she had supped moderately, drinking only water, and had begged the cook to send her in future only one dish besides soup.

'What does she take in the morning?'

'A little bread.'

'Tell her it is the custom of the house to serve breakfast in each room—coffee, tea, chocolate or broth—and that if she refuses, I shall be greatly hurt. Here is a crown for you; I will give you as much every week if you wait on her well.'

Before going to bed, I wrote her a note, begging her to choose a better room, which she did. She also accepted my offer of coffee. Wishing to persuade her to take her meals with me, I dressed myself carefully, and sent Clairmont up to Pauline to ask if she would receive me. She answered in the affirmative. I noticed several books on her table, and on the chest of drawers a lot of odds and ends which betokened anything but poverty.

'I am much obliged to you, sir,' she said, 'for all your kindness.'

'Don't speak of that, madam, I beg you. It is I who hope to be your debtor.'

'What can I do to show my gratitude?'

'Honour me with your company whenever I am alone, for when I am by myself I eat like an ogre, and my health suffers in consequence. If you do not feel inclined to accord

me this favour, forgive me for having asked it, and believe me it will in no wise alter your situation in my house.'

'I will do myself the honour of eating with you, sir, whenever you are alone, but I fear I shall be but poor company.'

I left her, with a low bow, not having even sat down, or asked her how she passed the night. I noticed that when I went in she was pale, and when I left her her cheeks were scarlet. I was already in love with her, and determined to do all in my power to make her reciprocate my feeling. I suspected her of being Italian, but I intended to be very cautious and not ask her any questions.

I went for a walk in the park, and when I returned I found Pauline had come down from her room unasked, and was waiting for me; this pleased me much. In reply to a question about her health, she said—

'I have never been ill in my life except at sea. I must own that that element is obnoxious to me.'

'You have travelled by sea?'

'It would be difficult to come to England otherwise.'

'I thought you were English.'

'I am not surprised. I have spoken the language since my earliest youth.'

On the table near the sofa where we sat was a chessboard; as Pauline was fingering the pieces I asked her if she knew the game.

'Yes, I play well, so I am told.'

'I play very badly, but let us have a game.'

We began, and in four moves I was checkmated; in the second game I was beaten again, but in the third I was victor.

'Dare I ask the name of your country?' I inquired of her.

'I foresee that I shall end by confiding in you absolutely, but for the present I beg of you not to ask me anything.'

Soon after this she retired to her own apartment, leaving me more than ever convinced that she was used to the best society.

There were three or four more skits on my advertisement in the *Advertizer*, mostly of an indecent nature, for it must be admitted that the right to say anything and everything in London is much abused. On Sunday I went to Mass at the Bavarian minister's with Martinelli. The chapel was crowded, and he pointed out to me many lords and ladies and other great personages who were Catholics, and did not conceal the fact. I looked for Miss Pauline, but did not see her. My state of mind about her was calculated to bring about an immediate explosion and declaration, yet I had not so much as kissed her hand.

'Are you married, dear Pauline?' I asked her one evening.

'Yes.'

'Do you know what maternal love is?'

'No, though I can easily imagine it.'

'Are you separated from your husband?'

'Yes; he is far away, but do not let us speak of it.'

'Tell me this: when I lose you, will it be to rejoin him?'

'Yes and I will promise you that I will not leave you till I leave England; when I go away from this happy island it will be to be happy with the man of my choice.'

'And I shall remain behind, poor miserable me! for I love you, Pauline, though I dare not show my love for fear of displeasing you.'

'Be generous, be calm, I am not free to listen to you—and perhaps I should not have the strength to resist you, and I beg you to spare me. Besides, remember we may be obliged to part to-morrow, and our separation would be all the more painful.'

'I must give way before your irresistible dialectics, beautiful Pauline. Will you let me see with what books you feed your sublime mind?'

'Certainly, but you will be disappointed.'

She showed me Milton in English; Ariosto in Italian; the *Caractères* of La Bruyère in French; the rest of her library was in Portuguese.

'These give me a high idea of your taste,' I said; 'but will

you tell me why this preference for Camoëns and his compatriots?'

'For a very sufficient reason. I am Portuguese.'

'You are Portuguese! I thought you were Italian! At your age, then, you speak five languages, for you must know Spanish?'

'Yes, though it is not absolutely indispensable for a Portuguese to speak Spanish.'

'Tell me who you are; tell me everything. I deserve, and will continue to deserve your confidence.'

'I believe you, and I will tell you all without fear or without restraint. As you love me, you could not wish to injure me.'

'What are all these manuscripts?'

'My history, which I have written down. Come, I will read it to you.'

CHAPTER XXIV

THE STORY OF THE FAIR PORTUGUESE

I AM the only daughter of the unfortunate Count de X——mo, whom Carvalho Œyras, the Marquis de Pombal, imprisoned for attempting the life of the king, and who died in prison. The attempted assassination was attributed to the Jesuits. I do not know if my father was guilty of participation in it, or if he was the innocent victim of private revenge, but I know that the tyrannical minister never dared bring him to trial, nor confiscate his wealth, of which I am now the possessor, though I cannot enjoy it except in my own country. My mother had been educated in a convent, of which her sister was the abbess, and where I had lessons from all sorts of masters, amongst others a learned Italian, who taught me all I know.

I was eighteen when my grandfather took me away from the convent. I should have preferred to remain there until my marriage, for I loved my aunt, the abbess.

My grandfather placed me with his sister-in-law, the Marquise de X——mo, who gave up half her house to me. I had a governess, companion, waiting-maids, pages, and servants, who were supposed to be in my service, but were really under the command of the governess, who was of noble family, though happily, for me, an honest and good woman.

A year later my grandfather told me the Comte de Fl—— had asked me in marriage for his son, who had just returned from Madrid, and that such a marriage would be pleasing to the whole nobility, and would be approved by the king and the royal family.

'But, dear grandpapa, am I sure to please the count?'

'No doubt about it, my child; besides, that is a point you need not take into consideration.'

'But, grandpapa, I must take that point into consideration. We must meet each other.'

'You will meet before the marriage, but that will not affect the conclusion.'

'I sincerely hope so, but we will not be too sure; we will see.'

I told my governess privately, that I was determined not to give my hand where I could not give my heart; or to a man whose character I had not studied. She did not answer, and when I insisted on her giving her opinion, she said that she could not pronounce on such a delicate point; this showed me very plainly she approved of my resolution.

Next day I went to see my aunt, the abbess, who listened to me kindly; she hoped, she said, that I should like the count, but in any case, the marriage was a settled thing; the Princess of Brazil had suggested it, for the count was a favourite of hers.

In a few days the count was introduced to me in the presence of a large gathering. There was no question of our marriage, but he talked a great deal about the foreign countries he had visited. I spoke little, but listened attentively. As I had but small experience, I could not judge him by comparison, but I felt I could never belong to him. He was a giggling, sneering, presumptuous fribble, stupid, ill-mannered, and devout to fanaticism. He was ugly, ill-made, conceited, and not ashamed to talk of his gallantries in public. I was anything but civil to him, and I hoped that he found me disagreeable. I heard nothing of him for eight days, and I began to breathe freely; then my great-aunt invited me to a dinner-party, where I met the fool and his father, and my grandfather presented the former to me as my future husband, bidding me fix a day for the signing of the contract. I would rather have signed my death sentence! I replied coldly that as soon as I had fixed on a day I would let them know, but that it would not be for some

time. The dinner was constrained. I answered only in monosyllables when directly addressed; after coffee I left the room, bowing only to my aunt and grandfather.

Some days went by without my hearing any more of the matter, and then my governess told me Father Freire wanted to see me. He was the confessor of the Princess of Brazil. He was shown in, and after a few desultory remarks said that the princess had charged him to congratulate me on my approaching marriage with the Comte de Fl-——.

Without betraying the slightest surprise, I said I was grateful for her royal highness's attention, but that nothing was settled as yet, as I had no intention of marrying. The priest, sly as any courtier, answered with a smile, that was half benign half sardonic, that I was of an age when I had no need to trouble about serious matters, but could leave such things to those who loved me.

I went to see the abbess again. She told me that she had seen the count, and had found him impossible, so that she greatly feared that they would force me into this repugnant union. Her words made such an impression on me, that I then and there conceived the most extraordinary plan. As soon as I got home, I shut myself up in my room, and without consulting any one, or listening to anything but the promptings of my own despair, I wrote to the persecutor of my unfortunate father, the pitiless Œyras. I told him the whole story, and begged him to intercede with the king for me. This much he owed me, I said, as it was he who had made me an orphan; he was responsible for me before God! I implored him to shelter me from the displeasure of the Princess of Brazil, and to obtain for me permission to dispose of my hand as I chose.

I did not suppose that Œyras had a tender heart, but I imagined he had at least a man's heart, and that I might touch it by my firm language, and by the strangeness of my appeal. He might, I thought, try to be just to me, as a proof that he had been just to my father. I was not mistaken.

Two days later a messenger from Œyras came to me privately. This messenger told me the minister had sent him confidentially, and that I was to reply, as regarded the marriage, that I could decide nothing, until I knew for certain that her royal highness, the Princess of Brazil, approved of it. The minister apologised for not writing; he had strong reasons for not doing so, he said, but I could count upon him. The bearer then withdrew without waiting for my answer. I must own that the appearance of the young man struck me. I cannot describe the impression he made on me, but it influenced my conduct then, and my whole after life.

The minister must have been certain that the princess would cease to meddle in the affairs of my marriage, and with an easy mind I allowed myself to dwell on the thoughts which were now uppermost in my imagination. I saw the young man at church, at the theatre, in the public gardens, in the houses where I visited; and whenever I entered my carriage, or left it, he was there to offer me his hand. I became so accustomed to seeing him, and thinking of him, that if by any chance I did not encounter him, I was uneasy, and life seemed a blank.

I often met Comte de Fl—— and his father at my great-aunt's house, but there was no more talk of an alliance between us.

One morning I heard a strange voice in my waiting-maid's room, and on going in I saw a quantity of lace spread out on the table; a young girl was standing near it, who made me a deep courtesy. I looked over, and did not care for any of her wares, and she said she would bring me something better next day. I looked at her as she spoke, and was struck by the extraordinary resemblance between her and the youth who was constantly in my thoughts. I could not, however, believe that they were the same. Such boldness seemed improbable; moreover, the girl appeared to me taller. After she had withdrawn, I asked my maid if she knew her; she told me she had never seen her before.

The next morning, at the same hour, she returned with a basket full of laces and blonds. I had her brought into my room, and when I forced her to speak to me, and to look at me, I was no longer in any doubt. I was so much troubled that I could not ask one of the questions I had prepared; besides, my maid was present, and I was afraid of compromising myself. When I had chosen several things, I sent the maid for my purse. As soon as she had left the room the pretended lace-seller fell at my feet, saying passionately—

'My fate is in your hands, madame; you have recognised me.'

'Yes, I have recognised you, and I can only think you are mad.'

'Yes, I am mad, but it is with love. I adore you.'

'Rise, I entreat you, my maid will be back in a moment.'

'She is in my pay.'

'What! you have dared——?'

He rose, and the maid coming in at that moment coyly counted him out his money. He collected his scattered pieces of lace, made me a low bow, and went away.

I ought to have dismissed the maid on the spot. I had not the courage; and I persuaded myself that the best thing I could do was to know nothing.

Fifteen days went by, and during the whole of this time I never once saw the young man. I became dreamy and melancholy, though I blushed to own the cause of my sadness even to myself. I was longing to know his name, but I could only ask it of my maid, and I detested her, and reddened whenever she came into my presence.

This state of things could not last for ever, and one day as I was putting on a blond fichu I had bought from the unknown, I said as nonchalantly as I could—

'What has become of the girl who sold me this?'

My maid was as sly as I was naïve. She answered that she probably had not dared to return for fear I should see through the disguise.

'I did see through the disguise,' I replied; 'but I am surprised to learn that you were aware that it concealed a young man.'

'I did not think it would displease you, madame; I know him personally.'

'Who is he?'

'The Comte d'Al——. You must have recognised him, for you received him in this room about four months ago.'

'May I ask why you lied to me when I asked you if you knew the lace-merchant?'

'I lied, madame, so as not to embarrass you; I thought you would be angry if you knew I was in the secret.'

This explanation, instead of revealing to me the real culpability of my servant, appeared to me quite satisfactory; besides, I was glad to learn the name and position of my admirer. I knew there was a young Comte d'Al——, of very good birth, but absolutely without fortune. He was, however, a protégé of the minister, and might obtain a place some day. This idea that Heaven might have destined me to supply his needs was very sweet to me, and I spent my time building castles in the air. My family would never permit me to marry him, even if he desired it, which seemed doubtful.

I was in this state when my maid took upon herself to write to him and tell him he could return in his woman's dress.

She came into my room, laughing, one morning.

'Madame,' she said, 'the lace-seller is here; shall I bring her in?'

'You are mad,' said I.

'Shall I send her away?'

'No; I will speak to her myself.'

We had a long conversation, the maid coming and going while we talked. I owned to him frankly that I loved him, but that it was hopeless. He told me the minister was about to send him to England on a mission, but that he should die of despair if he did not carry with him the hope of

possessing me one day, for he loved me too much to think of living without me. He begged me to let him continue his visits; and on his promising to be very prudent, I consented.

He was twenty-two years old, rather shorter than I, of a slim, graceful figure, a sweet voice, and little or no beard, so that it was easy for him to pass as a woman. During three months he came to see me three or four times a week, generally in the presence of the maid; but even had he been entirely unrestrained, I am sure he would never have shown me the smallest disrespect, and I believe that this restraint fanned the flame of our passion.

The moment of separation came unexpectedly, and when we were totally unprepared for it. My lover came to me one morning in tears; the minister had given him a letter addressed to Monsieur de Saa in London; and a frigate which was lying at Ferrol was to take him to England immediately. He was choking with grief, and incapable of putting his ideas together. Thinking only of his grief and my love, I concocted a plan as bold as it was hazardous. I would leave with him disguised as his servant. Upon reflection, however, we concluded that if the weather was rough, I might be tried beyond my strength, and that it would be better for me to go as the master, he as the man; but as I hated the idea of my lover passing as a servant, he finally determined that he should wear woman's clothes and travel as my wife.

'As soon as we get to England,' I said, 'we shall be married, the ceremony will efface the shame of our flight; you will be accused of having run away with me, but a man cannot run away with a girl without her consent, and the Comte d'Œyras will not persecute me for having made his favourite's fortune. In the meantime we can live on the produce of my diamonds; I will take my jewel-case with me.'

After waiting three days we heard that the frigate had left Ferrol, and was waiting at the mouth of the Tagus.

I shut myself up in my room, pretending to be ill, and

after having packed a small bag with a few indispensable things and the precious jewel-case, I donned my male attire and left the house by the servants' staircase. No one recognised me, not even the porter, as I crossed the threshold of my palace. The count was waiting for me a hundred yards off. We went first to his rooms, where he quickly transformed himself, and then aboard the ship. It was eleven o'clock when we sailed, and the captain did not appear until midnight. He came up to me with his officers, saying he had orders to treat me with the greatest attention. I introduced my wife, whom he saluted respectfully. He did not seem to think it strange that the minister had not mentioned the fact of the count being a married man.

We had a very commodious cabin, and passed the rest of the night in congratulating ourselves on having escaped so happily. At daybreak we were out of sight of Lisbon, and, tired out, I flung myself on a bench, while the count climbed into a large hammock. We were awakened from our sleep by the uneasiness which precedes sea-sickness, and for three days and nights we had not a moment of repose. On the fourth we could just stand up, were slightly better, and began to feel the first pangs of hunger.

My lover, who suffered more than I did, was glad of the pretext for not quitting his cabin, and the captain did not come near us once. I spent much of my time on the bridge looking through a telescope. On the seventh day out I had a presentiment of misfortune, when a sailor pointed out a corvette which he said must have left Lisbon a day or two after us, but which being a fine vessel would arrive before we did.

On the fourteenth day we cast anchor in the port of Plymouth, and an officer whom the captain sent ashore to obtain permission to disembark his passengers returned bearing letters, which he read with great attention. He then called me to one side.

'This letter,' he said, 'is from Count Œyras, and he warns me as I value my head not to let a young Portuguese

lady leave the ship; I am to take her back to Lisbon. Now there is no woman on board but your wife; prove to me that she is really your wife, and I will allow her to land, otherwise I cannot disobey the minister's orders.'

'She is my wife,' said I with assurance, 'but I have no papers with me to prove it.'

'I am very sorry, then, but she must return to Lisbon with me. But you may be sure she will be treated with all possible respect, according to the minister's orders.'

'But, captain, a wife is inseparable from her husband.'

'Granted, but I must obey my orders. You can return to Lisbon on the corvette; you will be there before we shall.'

'Why can I not return on the frigate?'

'Because I have imperative orders to land you here. And now I think of it, how was it the minister did not mention your wife when he told me to carry you to England? If madame is not the person he is looking for, she will be sent to join you in London.'

'Will you allow me to speak to her?'

'Yes, but in my presence.'

I went down into the cabin, and calling the count *my dear wife*, I told him what had happened. I was afraid he would betray himself, but he had strength of mind to keep it up, and to answer that there was nothing for us but to submit, and that we should meet again in a couple of months.

As I could not speak freely in the presence of the captain, I contented myself with telling him that I would write to the abbess from London, and that she was the first person he must go and see. He had my jewel-case in his pocket, but I did not dare to ask for it, as the magnificent diamonds would have made the captain think he was some rich girl I had betrayed.

We could not fight against our destiny. We embraced each other, weeping, and the captain himself shed tears when he heard me say: 'I commend your honour and mine to the kind captain, and let us trust in one another's constancy.'

His trunk was put in a boat. I did not dare take my bag, and I was landed with nothing but a man's wardrobe, the contents of which were displayed at the custom-house. I had some books, papers, letters, linen, some clothes, a sword, and two pairs of pistols. I went to an inn, where the host told me that if I wished to go to London, I could join a party that was going, and it would only cost me the price of a horse. He introduced me to these people, a Protestant minister and two ladies, and we supped together. I pleased them, and they pleased me, so we travelled together. I went to an inn in the Strand, but the next day looked out for cheaper lodgings. I only possessed fifty gold pieces and a ring worth about the same sum.

I took a room in a decent house, on the third story. The landlady was an honest, kind-looking woman, and I decided to trust her. I begged her to buy me the clothes proper to my sex, for I did not dare show myself dressed as a man. In two days I was attired as a poor girl who does not wish to dazzle or attract attention. I spoke English well, and knew that if I lived quietly I had nothing to fear.

I paid ten shillings a week rent; but I soon saw that though my hostess was a good woman, the house was not suitable for me. I received no visitors, but I could not prevent curious people from intruding on me at all times. We were close to the Stock Exchange, and a crowd of young men were always coming and going. Several of them took their meals in the house, and were persistent in their efforts to 'liven me up a bit,' as they expressed it.

I was determined not to spend more than one guinea a week, so I decided to sell my ring. An old man who lived next door offered me a hundred and fifty guineas for it. I did not know it was so valuable, and I let him have it, on condition he paid me four guineas a month, and would let me buy it back if I chose. I wanted to keep a certain sum about me, so as to be able to go to Lisbon by land as soon as I should receive permission to return. I had suffered too much on the sea to think of taking that route again.

I told my landlady that I must leave her, and she helped me to find a cheaper room. But I was obliged to engage a servant, as I could not take my meals outside, and this was a great annoyance to me, for I found nothing but worthless creatures who robbed me. Their thefts were not large, it is true, but when one can only spend a shilling a day every little counts. I was living on bread and water, and growing thinner daily, when chance brought your strange placard under my eye. My curiosity was aroused, and I could not resist the desire I had to see you and speak to you. I saw in the *Advertizer* a satire on your notice, which said you were an Italian, and not afraid of adventures. I, on my side, was not afraid of any violence. I thought I could defend myself but I feel now how presumptuous I was and what danger I ran. As I had been educated by an Italian, a man of great intelligence and probity, I have always had a predilection for your nation.

When the beautiful Portuguese had finished her story, 'Madame,' said I, 'you have interested me greatly; there is matter here for a romance.'

'So I think,' she said, 'and the romance is true.'

'And I shall not hate your nation any more. To tell the truth, I did so because you treated your Camoëns so badly.'

'Well, didn't the Greeks let Homer die!'

'One wrong doesn't excuse another.'

'True, but what can you know of Camoëns? You don't know Portuguese?'

'I have read a Latin translation.'

'I will learn Latin.'

'Let me teach you. Then I will vow to live and die in Portugal, if you will promise to give me your heart?'

'If only I had two hearts!' said she naïvely, and I pressed her to go on with her story.

The third day after my arrival in this immense city, I wrote to my aunt, the abbess, a long letter, telling her what

had happened to me. I implored her to protect him whom I consider my husband, and to support me in my resolution not to return to Lisbon until all opposition to our marriage is withdrawn. I asked her to let me know how things went on, and to write to me, under cover to my landlady. I sent my letter by Paris and Madrid—it is the most direct route by land—and I received an answer three months later. She told me the frigate had returned, and the captain had written to the minister, saying the lady was on board, and asking what was to be done with her. The minister replied that she was to be taken to the convent with a letter which he enclosed. In this letter he told my aunt he was sending her her niece, and that he hoped she would keep the young lady under lock and key. Fortunately, my aunt had received my letter first. She had my lover securely shut up, and then wrote to Œyras that the supposed niece was in reality a man in disguise, and that, therefore, she could not prolong his sojourn in her convent, and she begged his excellency to relieve her of the unwelcome visitor as soon as possible. When she had despatched this epistle, she paid a visit to Comte Al——, who flung himself at her feet and besought her to take us both under her protection. He gave her my jewels, which she was glad to receive.

As soon as the minister read her letter, he hastened to answer it in person, and she easily convinced him of the importance of keeping the whole affair a secret, for the sanctity of her convent had been violated, and, were it known, her honour would be compromised. She told him of my letter, and how she had my jewels in her possession.

He laughingly asked her to forgive him for having sent her such a good-looking young fellow to keep her company. He agreed with her that the greatest secrecy was necessary, and he took the count away with him in his carriage. Since then, to the moment of writing, the good abbess said, she had heard no more of my lover. All Lisbon was talking about us, but they had got hold of the wrong end of the story. The gossips had it that my lover was in London,

and the minister was keeping me in concealment, possibly because I had inspired him with tender sentiments. No doubt Œyras has kept himself well informed concerning me, for he knows the name I go under and my address, and has set spies to keep a watch on my movements. On the advice of my aunt, I wrote to him, telling him I was quite ready to return to Lisbon if he would assure me that directly I arrived there I should be publicly united to Al——, otherwise I would remain in London all my life, for there, at least, the laws assure me complete liberty. I am now awaiting his answer, which, I believe, will be favourable. No one can deprive me of my fortune, which is absolutely at my own disposal, and Œyras, I think, will be glad to be of service to me, if only to compensate in some degree for his share in my father's death.

Pauline told me the real names of the actors in her drama; but as she is still living, and as her memory is very dear to me, I will not run the risk of offending her by mentioning them here. It suffices to say that her story was absolutely true, and well known to the inhabitants of Lisbon. The personages alluded to were well-known and prominent people.

CHAPTER XXV

THE RECALL OF MISS PAULINE

Our friendship grew more perfect each day, but, alas! friendship was not enough for me. I could neither eat nor sleep; my health was suffering. Pauline, on the contrary, grew robust and beautiful in proportion as I languished and became thin.

'You think,' she said to me one morning, 'that you are dying for love of me, but it is not sentiment which is making you thin and sleepless; it is the sedentary life you are leading. If you wish to please me, go for a long ride.'

'I can refuse you nothing, lovely Pauline; but when I come back——?'

'You will find me grateful, you will have a good appetite, and you will sleep well.'

My horse, quick!—my riding boots!—a parting kiss on her beautiful hand, and I am on the road to Kingston! I put my horse at a gallop, when all of a sudden he stumbled, fell, and flung me on the pavement in front of the Duke of Kingston's door. Miss Chudleigh happened to be looking out of the window. She saw me with my legs in the air, and screamed. I turned my head at her cry; she recognised me, and sent one of her men to my assistance. He raised me to my feet, but I could not move. I was carried into a room on the ground floor, and one of the footmen, who was also a surgeon, declared I had dislocated my collar-bone.

'You must take a complete rest for a week,' he said.

The young miss assured me that, if I would remain in her house, I should be most carefully nursed. I thanked her warmly, but on the pretext that I should be in the way, I asked to be taken home. She immediately gave the order,

with charming grace, and I was driven back in a comfortable carriage. The two servants who accompanied me refused to accept anything for their trouble; and in this little trait I recognised the delicate hospitality for which the English are so justly celebrated, though I must qualify my praise by remarking on their egoism, which is an equally national characteristic. As soon as I got home, I went to bed and sent for a doctor, who laughed at the mention of dislocation.

'It is a mere sprain,' he said. 'I wish you had broken a bone, that I might have a chance of showing my skill.'

'I am glad,' said I, 'not to put you to the test. I shall think just as highly of you if you cure me quickly.'

I had not yet seen Pauline, and this rather astonished me. I was told she had gone out in a chair, and I could not control a slight feeling of jealousy, though I had no real suspicion of her. After waiting two hours she returned, and entered my room in a state of great emotion, for the old housekeeper had told her I had broken my leg.

'It is I,' she cried, running to my bedside, 'who am the cause of this disaster!' and, pale as death, she fell, almost fainting, at my side.

'Divine creature,' I exclaimed, pressing her in my arms, 'it is only a sprain.'

'God be praised! but that stupid old woman, how she terrified me! Feel my heart, how it beats!'

'I feel it, I feel it with delight. O happy accident!'

Pressing my lips to hers, I felt that my kisses were returned, and I blessed the accident which had forced her to declare herself.

Then Pauline began to laugh.

'What are you laughing at, my angel?'

'At love's little ruses, which always triumph.'

'Where have you been?'

'To my old pawnbroker, to get my ring, which I want to give to you so that you may always have a souvenir of me.'

'O Pauline! I care more for love than diamonds.'

'You will have both; from now to the time of my departure, which will come all too soon, we will live like a loving couple, and we will have supper served here, on your bed, which you must not leave. I am tired of living beside you, loving you as I do, and watching you suffer. I determined to be yours this morning; I went out to get the ring, and I do not mean to leave you again till the fatal letter arrives.'

'May the courier be robbed on the road!'

'No such luck for us, dear friend!'

She fetched Ariosto, and read me the adventure of Ricciardetto with Fiord'espina, Princess of Spain. It suited our case admirably, I confess.

I gazed on my Pauline, the most beautiful woman in Portugal, last scion of an old and noble house, who had given herself to me for love, and who could only be mine for a very short time. A great sadness took possession of my soul.

'Tell me,' she said, after a while, 'if shame disappears after knowledge, how is it that our first parents were not abashed until they had eaten of the tree?'

'I cannot say, my beloved. Why did you not ask your learned Italian tutor?'

'I did ask him, and he said it was not because they had enjoyed the fruit, but because they had disobeyed, and that by covering themselves they thought they could disown the fault they had committed. Whatever one may say, I think Adam was far more to blame than Eve.'

'And why?'

'Because Adam had received the prohibition direct from God, while Eve only learned it through Adam.'

'I think they both of them received it from God.'

'You have not read Genesis then, or you have read it carelessly, for it distinctly says that God made Eve after He had forbidden Adam to eat of the tree; but the interpreters

of the Scriptures are generally enemies of our sex; my preceptor, however, was an honest man.'

'Was he a Jesuit?'

'Yes, but a short-frocked one.'

'What is that?'

'I will tell you another time.'

'Very well, my dear, and you shall show me how a Jesuit and an honest man can walk hand in hand.'

Pauline was deeply religious, but a bit of a freethinker. I have known many women of this turn of mind. To thoroughly appreciate their virtues and the elevation of their minds one must begin by making sinners of them.[1]

I resolved not to leave my house as long as Pauline remained in London, and she was only absent on Sundays for Mass. I forbade my door to every one, even the doctor, and sent word to Miss Chudleigh that I was well; she had been inquiring after my health twice daily.

I wrote to Martinelli to procure me the best miniature painter in London; and he sent me a Jew, who succeeded in producing two admirable likenesses. I had mine mounted as a ring, and it was the only present Pauline would accept from me.

We had three weeks of happiness. Every day I discovered fresh qualities and beauties in my beloved. She was beginning to flatter herself that the letter which would recall her to Lisbon would never come; we made plans for the future, and Comte Al—— existed only in her memory. She said to me sometimes that she could not understand the mere power of a handsome face over a woman's affections.

'I realise,' she said, 'that a union based on such a trifling circumstance has a very poor chance of happiness.'

But the first of August was a fatal date for her and for me. She received letters from Lisbon, which left her no pretext for postponing her departure. One letter was from

[1] Cf

'Would she could make of me a saint
Or I of her a sinner!'—CONGREVE.

her aunt, the other from the minister Œyras. The latter conjured her to return to Lisbon as quickly as possible, by sea or by land; he assured her that on her arrival she would be put in possession of all her fortune, and that she might publicly marry the Comte Al——. He sent her a note for twenty million reis. As I was not aware of the small value of this money, I was in ecstasies; but Pauline laughingly told me that the twenty millions were only worth two thousand pounds sterling, which sum would insure her travelling like a duchess. Œyras said that if she decided to go by sea, she had but to tell Monsieur de Saa, the Portuguese ambassador, and a frigate which was stationed at one of the English ports would be placed at her disposal. She would not hear of the frigate, or of de Saa, and was very indignant at Œyras having sent her the note, for, she said, it meant he supposed her to be in need of money.

Pauline was rich, and generous, judging from the ring she forced on me when she was, so to speak, in poverty. She certainly did not rely on my providing for her, though she knew I would never abandon her. I am sure she thought I was wealthy, and I never undeceived her.

We passed our last days together, drowned in grief. We looked at each other without daring to speak; we sat down to table, without being able to eat; we went to bed, without being able to sleep.

I accompanied her to Calais. We left London on the 10th of August, only stopping at Dover for an hour or so. On the 12th of August she left me, taking with her my faithful Clairmont, whose escort I had induced her to accept as far as Madrid.

'One thing I will ask of you,' she said, 'and that is, never to come to Lisbon, unless I should ask you to do so. I need not give you my reasons. You will understand that you must not trouble my peace. I could not be wicked without becoming unhappy, and loving me as you do, would you be the instrument of my undoing? Believe me, I shall try to persuade myself that I have lived with you as your wife,

that I am a widow, and that I am going to Lisbon to be married a second time.'

My separation from Pauline resembled, in many ways, that which had afflicted me so deeply, fifteen years before, when I parted from Henriette at Geneva. The characters of these two incomparable women were alike in many details; difference of education alone had rendered one more gay, more talented, and less prejudiced than the other. Pauline had the noble pride of her nation. She was more serious, and more religious; she was also more passionate than Henriette. I was happy with them both, because during the time these two liaisons lasted I was rich, otherwise I should not have known either. I have forgotten them, because one forgets all things, but when I recall their memories I find that Henriette made the more profound impression on me, doubtless because I was but twenty-two when I was with her, whereas in London I was thirty-seven. The longer I live the more I feel how great an influence age has on our impressions.

I left Calais on the day Pauline commenced her journey. I had a bad crossing, and as soon as I got home, I shut myself up, a victim to true British *spleen*. Jarbe, my good negro servant, put me to bed.

When he brought me my chocolate next morning, he said naïvely: 'The housekeeper wants to know, sir, if she is to hang out the notice-board again?'

'The wretch! does she wish me to strangle her?'

'No, sir; but she is very devoted to you, and seeing you so sad, she thought——'

'Get away with you, and tell her never to dare think of such a thing again, or you either.'

CHAPTER XXVI

THE STORY OF MISS CHARPILLON

THE next few weeks were one continuous nightmare. I was in a sombre, desperate mood, ready to kill the first man who contradicted me, or to stake my life on the ace of spades. Then one day, eager for diversion of any sort, I met a woman destined to play a most unfortunate rôle in my life.

A Flemish officer whom I had assisted at Aix-la-Chapelle had paid me several visits, and had even dined with me two or three times, but I had never been to his house. I decided this day to return his courtesy, and was in conversation with him and his wife when an old woman and a young girl came into the room. The officer presented me as the Chevelier de Seingalt, whereat the girl looked astonished, and said she had once known a Signor Casanova, who was strikingly like me. I told her that that also was my name, but that I did not remember her.

'In those days I was called Anspergher,' she said; 'but now I am called Charpillon. You only saw me once, when I was a little girl of thirteen. You were in the Palais Royal in Paris, with a charming lady, and you made me a present of a pair of strass buckles—I have them on my shoes at this moment,—and then, encouraged by my aunt, who was with me, you did me the honour of embracing me.'

'I remember, mademoiselle, I remember you distinctly now, and I have a letter for you, but I do not recognise your aunt.'

'This is another aunt. If you will come and take tea with us, you will meet the one you saw in Paris. But give me the letter.'

I took it out and gave it her.

'What,' she said, 'from my dear ambassador, my dear Morosini. Why didn't you give it me three months ago?'

'I am to blame, mademoiselle, but there is no address. I am glad to have met you.'

'We live in Denmark Street, Soho. Will you come to-morrow?'

'Unfortunately I am engaged. Lord Pembroke dines with me.'

'Will you be alone?'

'I think so.'

'Then we will come and see you.'

I gave her my address. On hearing it she smiled.

'Why, you are the Italian gentleman whose notice of lodgings to let made all the town laugh! I am told the joke cost you dear!'

'On the contrary, I owe to it some of my happiest memories.'

'I wanted to offer myself as a lodger, but my mother would not let me.'

'What need had you to look for a cheap lodging?'

'None whatever; but I wanted to amuse myself and punish the audacious writer of the notice.'

'How would you have punished me?'

'By making you love me, so that you suffered the most frightful tortures afterwards. Oh, how I should have laughed!'

'You think you can make any one you choose fall in love with you, and then propose to play the tyrant? The scheme is monstrous, and it is a pity you do not let men see more plainly the kind of woman you are. I, at least, will be on my guard against you.'

'You must make a resolution not to see me again, then, or else all your labour will be lost.'

I considered this little dialogue to be merely a passing pleasantry, for Miss Charpillon was laughing all the time; but I could not help admiring her beauty and a vivacity which was calculated to help her to carry out any plan she

might choose to form. The day that I met this woman was an accursed day for me.

It was towards the end of September that I made her acquaintance, and on that day the period of my physical and moral death set in. If the perpendicular line of ascent equals the line of descent, as mine must do to-day, the first day of November 1797, I can count on about four years more of life which will pass rapidly, according to the axiom, *'Motus in fine velocior.'*

Miss Charpillon, who was notorious all over London, and who I believe to be still living, was one of those beauties in whom it is impossible to find the slightest physical defect. Her hair, of a lovely light chestnut colour, was surprisingly long and thick; her blue eyes languished and sparkled alternately. She was tall and slim, with a dazzlingly white skin; her bosom was small but perfectly formed; her white dimpled hands were rather longer than ordinary; her feet were tiny, and her walk graceful. Her gentle face bore an expression of candour and openness, and bespoke the most exquisite delicacy of feeling. In this respect, alas! nature was pleased to lie.

I left Malingan's house, not as an eager sensualist who has just made the acquaintance of a rare beauty and rejoices at the thought that she will one day assuredly be his, but as one absolutely overcome and stupefied! The image of my dear Pauline could not withstand the impression Miss Charpillon, whom I despised, had made on me. I tried to persuade myself that disillusionment would soon set in. 'I shall cease to find her marvellous,' I thought, 'as soon as I have gained her, and that will not be long!' I could not suppose her difficult of conquest. She had invited herself to dinner with me. I knew she had been the mistress of Morosini, and as he was neither young nor handsome, she must have yielded to him from cupidity. Without flattering myself that I should make her love me, I was determined not to spare gold, if gold could win her.

When Pembroke learned who were to be his fellow-

guests, he exclaimed: 'The hussy inspired me with a violent desire once. I met her and her aunt one evening at Vauxhall, and offered her twenty guineas if she would walk down one of the alleys with me. She accepted, on condition I paid her in advance, which I was weak enough to do. As soon as we were in the alley she ran away from me, and I was not able to catch her again the whole of that evening.'

'You ought to have boxed her ears in public.'

'I should only have got into trouble and been laughed at for my pains. I preferred to despise her and the money she had got out of me. Are you in love with her?'

'No; but I am curious, as you were.'

'Be careful, she will play you a trick.'

When she appeared, she went up to Pembroke and made him pretty speeches without paying the slightest attention to me. She talked and laughed over the adventure at Vauxhall, and twitted him with cowardice.

'Another time,' she said, 'I shall not escape you.'

'Very probably, my dear, for next time I shall not pay you beforehand.'

'Oh, fie for shame! Pay is an ugly word, which does you no credit.'

'Perhaps you think it does you honour.'

'Such a detail as that should never be mentioned.'

She was piqued at the indolent fashion in which he spoke to her, and left us soon after dinner, having made me promise to dine with her.

On the appointed day, led by my evil star, I went to Miss Charpillon's house. She presented me to her mother, who, old, withered, and changed as she was by illness, I remembered perfectly. She awakened strange memories. In the year 1759 an individual named Bolomé, from Geneva, had persuaded me to sell her six thousand francs' worth of jewellery. She had given me two notes of hand, signed by herself and her two sisters, and drawn on this same Bolomé, who became bankrupt before the notes were due, and she and her sisters disappeared. My surprise at meeting the

three sisters was equalled by their own, for Miss Charpillon had not told them that Seingalt was the Casanova they had defrauded.

'I have the pleasure of recognising you, madame.'

'And I you too, sir. That scoundrel of a Bolomé——'

'Do not let us speak of him, at any rate not to-day. I see that you are ill.'

'I have been at death's door, but am better now. My daughter did not announce you by your name.'

'Pardon me, my name is Seingalt as well as Casanova.'

At this moment the grandmother and the two aunts came in, followed by the Chevalier Goudar, whom I had known in Paris, and two other men named Rostaing and Caumont. They were the three friends of the family, and their business was to inveigle dupes and take their part in plundering them.

Such was the infamous company in which I found myself. I secretly swore I would never set foot in the house again; but Miss Charpillon, apologising for the indifferent dinner at her house, cleverly forced me to invite them all to a supper on a date she herself fixed. After coffee, we played four rubbers of whist. I lost; and at midnight went home, vexed and displeased with myself, but more bewitched than ever.

I passed two days without seeing her, the third was the day on which the supper was to take place. At nine o'clock in the morning she appeared with her aunt.

'I have come,' she said in the most engaging way, 'to have breakfast with you, and to speak to you on a matter of business.'

'Now, or after breakfast?'

'Afterwards, for we must be alone.'

When the meal was over, the aunt went into another room, and Miss Charpillon explained to me that her family was in a most unfortunate position, but that if her aunt had a hundred guineas she could make a small fortune.

'And how?'

'She would compose and sell the elixir of life, of which she alone has the secret.'

She then dilated at some length on the properties of this marvellous elixir, of its probable sale in a city like London, and of the profits in which I should naturally share. Her mother and her aunts proposed to give me a written promise to pay back the hundred guineas in six years.

'I will give you a definite reply after supper.'

Then assuming the caressing airs of a man in love, I vainly attempted to win some marks of her favour. I caught hold of her, but, supple and lithe as a snake, she slipped through my fingers, and ran laughing to join her aunt. I followed her, laughing forcedly, and she gave me her hand, saying, 'Farewell, till to-night.'

I was not displeased at this incident, for I thought she must be in need of money, to ask me for it on so short an acquaintance. It rested with me to see that the bargain was not a one-sided one.

When the company arrived in the evening, she suggested that I should make a little bank against them to wile away the time till supper, but I declined.

'We will have a game of whist, then,' she said.

'You do not appear in a hurry for the answer I was to give you,' I remarked.

'You have made up your mind to say yes, I hope?'

'Yes. Come with me.'

She followed me into another room, when, after having seated myself beside her, I said the money was at her disposal. I tried once more to kiss her, but she said, 'You will obtain nothing from me by money or violence. You may hope everything from my friendship, but only when I have found you as gentle as a lamb.'

I went back into the drawing-room in the most devilish humour; as for her, she was sparkling with gaiety, but she annoyed me. After supper she drew me aside, and asked if I would give her aunt the money.

'As we shall have to write about it,' I answered, 'we will put it off to another day.'

'Will you fix a day?'

Drawing a purse full of gold from my pocket, I showed it her. 'Whenever you like,' I said.

When my odious guests left me, I recovered my sanity to a certain extent. The little intriguer had laid a spell on me, just to get my money from me, without any return. I resolved there and then to break with her, and to distract my thoughts I would go and see Sophie.

I took an immense box of sweetmeats and preserves with me, and spent a delicious day with my child and her young companions. I returned again and again to Harwich, and in three weeks flattered myself I had forgotten Miss Charpillon, or rather had replaced her with a more innocent love (though I must own that one of Sophie's companions inspired me with an affection not altogether fraternal).

I was in this blessed condition, when one morning in walked Charpillon's favourite aunt. They were all surprised and mortified, she said, at not having seen me since the supper-party; besides her niece had told her I had promised to advance her the money she needed to make her elixir of life.

'I would have given you the hundred guineas if your niece had treated me properly, but she chose to give herself the airs of a vestal virgin, which you are well aware spells nonsense.'

'The dear child is young and foolish; she is only to be won by affection; she has told me all. She loves you, but fears that your feeling for her is only a caprice. She is in bed now with a feverish cold; come and see her. I am sure you will not leave her again in anger.'

These specious words, instead of filling me with contempt, aroused all the latent passion in me.

'Go on ahead, I will follow,' I said.

In less than a quarter of an hour I was knocking at Miss Charpillon's door.

The aunt opened it softly.

'Come back in an hour,' she said; 'she has been ordered a bath, and has just got into it.'

'This is only another infamous piece of deception; you are a liar, and she is a brazen cheat.'

'You are severe and unjust; but if you promise to be reasonable I will take you up to her on the third floor. She can say what she likes about it, at any rate you will see I have not deceived you.'

I followed her upstairs; she pushed me into a room, and closed the door on me. Miss Charpillon was in a large bath; her back was turned to me. Said the miserable coquette, pretending not to know who it was: 'Aunt, will you give me some towels, please.'

But as soon as she saw me she crouched down, and pretended to be very angry.

'Go away! go away!'

'Spare yourself the trouble of crying out, my dear, you cannot impose upon me; and do not fear, I shall do you no harm, that would be playing into your hands.'

'My aunt shall pay me for this.'

'As you like, but I am her friend henceforth. I won't touch you. Stay as you are.'

'Monster!'

At this moment the aunt came in, and I left the room without saying another word. She followed me downstairs, and asked me if I was satisfied.

'Yes,' said I, 'for I now know you both thoroughly. Here is your money.'

I tossed a hundred-guinea note into her lap, fool that I was, saying she could make her balm of life, and that as for her promise to repay, I would not give one damn for it.

Six or seven days after, I met her at Vauxhall, with her aunt and Goudar, and she inveigled me into giving them supper. She asked me to take her home, but I refused, paid the bill, and left her. But she was not one to relinquish her prey so easily. She sent Goudar to me. The wretch began

by congratulating me on my wisdom in staying away from the Ansperghers' house.

'You don't know that girl,' he said; 'you would have fallen deeper and deeper in love, and she would have beggared you before she was done with you.'

'You must think me a fool; if she had been amiable I should have been grateful, but not extravagant, in my marks of appreciation. I am not the man to be beggared by a creature like that.'

'I am glad to hear it. Then you have made up your mind not to see her again? She has cost you a hundred guineas, and you have not had so much as a single kiss for it! She boasts now that she has taken you in. I will tell you now why I frequent this house. It is not, as you think, because I take part in their schemes. It was I who introduced her to Morosini, the Venetian minister. He took a house for her, and gave her fifty guineas a month. I made some little conditions for myself. Morosini remained one year in England. After him Miss Charpillon lived with Lord Baltimore, Lord Grosvenor, the Portuguese minister, de Saa, and others, but has not fulfilled any of her engagements with me. I shall never leave until she does; and I warn you again that they are plotting to get hold of you, and they will succeed unless you are very careful.'

'Tell the mother there is another hundred guineas at her disposal, if her daughter will be civil to me.'

I kept the scamp to dinner, for he was likely to be of use to me in the kind of life I was leading. He was a devil for tricks, and not without a certain cleverness. He wrote several books which were not so bad; he was then at work on his *Chinese Spy*.

The next day, when she was certainly far from my thoughts, in came Miss Charpillon, accompanied by a plain young woman, whom she presented as Miss Lorenzi, and who soon withdrew discreetly.

'Is it true,' began Miss Charpillon, 'is it true you told Goudar to offer my mother a hundred guineas for me?'

'Is it not enough?'

'Have you any right to insult me?'

'I am sorry you think so; it is not my fault. Goudar is one of your most intimate friends, and it is probably not the first proposition of that nature he has made you.'

'I pass by your remark in silence, but would remind you that I have told you that you will never win me by violence or bribery, but only by making me care for you. I have not broken my word to you, it is you who have broken yours to me. Only a scoundrel like Goudar would have delivered a message like yours.'

'Goudar a scoundrel! he is your best friend. You know he loves you: he got you the ambassador in the hope of getting you eventually. You are in his debt; pay him, and then abuse him. Do not cry. I know the source of your tears; it is not one that does you credit, it is impure.'

'You do not know it. Learn, then, hard-hearted man, that I love you, and that you treat me very cruelly.'

'You show your love in a strange way.'

'And you? You treat me as the lowest of the low, as a slavish animal, as the thing of my mother. If you had cared for me, you would have come to me yourself; you would have written, you would never have made use of a cowardly messenger, I should have answered you, and you would not have been wronged.'

'And suppose I had done so, how would you have answered me?'

'I would never have mentioned money, and only on condition that you made courteous love to me for a whole fortnight, coming to see me every day. We would have amused ourselves innocently; we would have gone to the play; you would have made me madly in love with you. I am surprised that a man like you should be content with a woman who gives herself for interest only. Miserable creature that I am! I was made for pure and honest love, and for one moment I thought you were the man who was to inspire me with a veritable affection. On the contrary you

have made me unhappy. You are the first man who has ever seen me weep; you have made my home unbearable to me, for my mother shall never have the money she counts on; no, not if you would give it me for a single kiss.'

'I am sorry I have hurt you; I did not mean to, but what is done can't be undone.'

'Yes, it can. You can come to our house, but keep your despicable money. Conquer my love as an honest, straightforward lover, not as a brute, for you must believe it now, I love you.'

She was a born actress! I was in her toils again, and I promised I would do as she wished, but only for a fortnight, as she herself proposed. As she rose to go, I asked her to give me a kiss as a token of our reconciliation, but she replied with a smile that we must not begin by breaking our own rules. She left me more lovesick than ever, and deeply ashamed of my treatment of her.

I began my visits that very evening. I gathered from the warmth of my welcome that I had won the game. I passed fifteen days without even kissing her hand. Each time I went I took her a valuable present, which she received with every expression of gratitude; besides this I escorted her constantly to the play, and made excursions with her in the environs of London. That fortnight cost me four hundred guineas.

When my term of probation was ended, I asked her, in her mother's presence, if I might stay and sup with them, or would they come to me? I did not mention that the supper at my house would be a good deal better. But no. Her mother asked me in a low voice if I would leave with the rest of the company, and return later, bringing the money.

'For shame,' cried the daughter, as the mother withdrew.

Now was the moment when my long and faithful service was at last to be rewarded. I approached her, but she gently eluded me, and put out the light. I found her huddled up, her knees touching her chin, her body wrapped in a long gown tightly wound round her, her arms crossed and her

head held down. I begged, I scolded, I cursed, nothing would make her change her position or open her lips. At first I thought it was a joke, but I soon saw it was deadly earnest. I had once more been duped and humiliated by the wretched woman.

My love turned to rage. I shook her like a bundle of rags; I rolled her over and over; she said never a word. My hands became like the claws of a wild beast; I ill-used her, I struck her, I even tried to strangle her. I spoke to her in every tone, used gentleness, anger, argument, remonstrance, threats, despair, prayers, tears, insults, for three long hours. She remained impervious to them all. At last, I made up my mind to leave her. My head burning, my body worn out, my mind conscious of its degradation, I left the accursed house. I gained my house, shivering with cold and fever; I could touch nothing, and for several days was confined to my bed, aching in every limb and racked with pain. I gave orders to my servants to admit no one, and to place all my letters on my desk. When at last I was sufficiently recovered to attend to them, imagine my joy at finding one from Pauline, written from Madrid. My faithful Clairmont, she said, had saved her life as they were fording a river, and as she could never hope to find another servant so devoted, she had decided to keep him with her till she reached Lisbon, and send him back by sea from thence. I was glad at this for her sake, but it was fatal to him, poor fellow. The ship in which he embarked was wrecked; I supposed that he had perished in the waves, for I never saw him again.

There was a letter from Miss Charpillon, and two from her infamous mother, who said in one her daughter was ill in bed and covered with bruises, the result of my ill-treatment, and that she was going to institute proceedings against me at once. In her second letter she said she heard I was ill too, and regretted it the more as her daughter admitted that I might have some reasons for complaint. Miss Charpillon's letter was a model of hypocrisy. She owned that

she had behaved badly, and wondered I had not killed her. She would have made no opposition to that, for death was the only alternative in the dilemma in which I had placed her. She supposed I would never go to her house again, but would I receive her once, just once more, as she had something important to communicate to me which she would not write.

I had just finished reading these epistles, when Goudar was shown in.

'Miss Charpillon is not ill,' he said, 'but she is covered from head to foot with bruises. Her mother it was who made the girl promise to withstand you, and you may be sure of one thing, until her mother gives her leave, you will never get her; and the mother declares that when once she is yours you will abandon her.'

'Perhaps, but I should have loaded her with presents first; now she will get nothing.'

'Well, you are wise, I think, but I should like to show you something which will astonish you. I will be back in a few minutes.'

He returned in half an hour accompanied by a porter, bearing an armchair, which, as soon as we were alone, he asked if I would like to buy.

'What should I want it for? It is not an attractive piece of furniture.'

'Nevertheless, it is worth a hundred guineas.'

'I wouldn't give three for it.'

'This chair has five springs,' said he, taking off the holland cover, 'which all work at once. As soon as any one sits down in it, two seize the arms, two the legs, and the fifth raises the seat, so that the person is thrown back.' He illustrated his description by seating himself on the diabolical machine; behold, there he was spread out and powerless, before my eyes. I could not help laughing.

'I will not buy it,' I said, 'but you can leave it here till to-morrow.'

'Not one hour, unless you buy it; the owner is waiting round the corner.'

'You can take it back to him, then, I would not use the repulsive thing.'

He had to explain what I must do to set him at liberty, for the springs were strong and tightly clasped; and I was glad to see the last of him and his machine, which, had I consented to avail myself of it, might have led me to the gallows.

Miss Charpillon waited a fortnight for an answer to her letter, and then came to seek it herself in a sedan-chair. I was sitting quietly taking my chocolate, and I did not get up or offer her any. She asked me for some, and modestly held up her face to be kissed, but I turned my head away.

'Perhaps you don't care to see the marks of the blows you gave me,' she said.

'You lie! I never struck you!'

'Perhaps not, but your tiger's claws have left bruises all over my body.' Saying this she unfastened her bodice, and showed me livid spots on her neck and shoulders.

Coward that I was! why did I not turn away my eyes? I pretended not to take any notice, but I must have looked very ridiculous; this little girl was more than a match for me, though I had fed myself on the wisdom of the ancients. She knew well enough that I was taking in the poison of her glances at every pore.

She talked for two hours and persuaded me that her mother was to blame for what had happened; that if she could be with me as she was with Morosini, clear of her family—I must make her mother an allowance, for she was not of age—all would be well. I said I would ask her mother all the same, and she seemed surprised. She dined with me, and I believe that that day she would have refused me nothing. I did not ask. Why? Because I felt that, to a certain extent, she was in the position of a criminal before her judge, and perhaps also because I chose to behave like a fool, as I have done many times in my life. She was cross

when she left me, and no doubt determined to revenge herself for what she supposed my contemptuous attitude.

I had an interview with the mother next day.

'I will take a house,' I said. 'Your daughter will live there, and I will give her fifty guineas a month to do what she likes with.'

'What you give her has nothing to do with me,' said the hag, 'but before she leaves my hands she must hand me over the hundred guineas you promised.'

I took a pretty cottage at Chelsea, and paid ten guineas for one month in advance. The girl's belongings were sent down there, and feeling that I had now nothing to fear, I handed the hundred guineas over to her avaricious parent. Miss Charpillon seemed delighted with the cottage. We took a little walk and then supped merrily. The scene of Denmark Street was enacted all over again, but this time she dared to answer me disdainfully, and to laugh insolently when I reproached her. Beside myself with rage, I dealt her a sound box on the ear, which I followed up by a vigorous kick, which sent her sprawling on the floor. She screamed murder and thieves, and made such an infernal noise that the landlord came up. Her nose was bleeding violently, and though I could not understand, as she spoke in English, I inferred from her gestures that she was giving her version of the story.

Fortunately the man spoke Italian. He told me she wished to leave the house then and there, and advised me not to oppose her, as she might get me into trouble, and he would be obliged to bear witness against me.

'Get her out of my sight,' I said, 'as quickly as you can, and let me never see her again.'

She stanched the blood, made herself neat, and went off in a sedan-chair, leaving me mute and motionless.

The reader perhaps imagines that my infatuation was now at an end. No such thing. On receiving, through Goudar, a message from the mother, to the effect that she hoped I should still continue to be a friend of the family,

I was weak and foolish enough to pay her a visit. During the hour which I passed with them, Charpillon never opened her lips. She kept her head bent over her embroidery, on which from time to time a tear dropped silently. Every now and then she turned her cheek officiously in my direction, so that I might see her swollen cheek. I continued to see her every day. She was always silent, but during these mad visits the venom of desire penetrated my whole being so completely that had she so wished it, she could have despoiled me of everything I possessed. I would have beggared myself for one little kiss.

I bought a superb painted panel for her mantelpiece, and a magnificent breakfast service, in Sèvres porcelain, which I sent her, with a love-letter. I must have appeared to her the most extravagant and the most dastardly of men. She accepted all, and wrote me a note, saying she would receive me *en tête-à-tête*, and would prove her love and gratitude.

After supper, I drew from my pocket-book the two bills of exchange which I had been given years before by her mother, and which, the reader will remember, had been returned to me dishonoured. I told her the history of them, and I gave her them as a proof that I had no desire to be revenged on her mother or her aunts; if she would be kind to me, I would sign them in her favour, so that she could draw the sums mentioned on them, but until then she must promise not to let them leave her hands. She was warm in her praises of my generosity and magnanimity, and having given me her word not to dispose of them, she locked them up in her desk. I thought that I had now given her the last and most convincing mark of my affection, I took her in my arms, when, behold, she began to weep bitterly!

Commanding myself as well as I could, I asked her if she thought she would ever feel differently. She sighed, and after a moment's silence, answered *No*. This cold reply staggered me. I remained for a quarter of an hour without

speaking, or moving; then I rose, took my cloak and my sword, and prepared to depart.

'What!' she said, 'you will not stay with me?'

'No.'

'Shall we meet to-morrow?

'I hope so. Adieu.'

I left this hell and went home to bed. At eight o'clock the following morning she was at my house. I told Jarbe I would not receive her, but she pushed past him.

'I hope,' said I, 'that you have brought me the two bills I confided to you last night.'

'I have not them with me, but why do you wish me to return them?'

At these words my rage got the better of me and, breaking all bounds, spent itself in a flood of invective. My nature had need of some such explosion. I was overwrought; tears came to my relief; I cried like a woman.

The infamous creature waited until she saw me weak and exhausted with sobbing, unable to utter a word, then gently and sweetly told me she had sworn to her mother to preserve always the strictest austerity of conduct in her house, and that was why she had come to me here. She was mine, and if I would keep her, she would never leave me.

The transition from love to anger is rapid; the opposite process is long and difficult. Mere rage may be appeased by tears, caresses, and submission; but when a man feels that he has been deceived and cruelly trifled with, he is temporarily incapable of the softer emotions. With me the mere paroxysm of anger has ever been of brief duration, but when I am indignant as well, pride makes me inflexible, until time brings forgetfulness.

Charpillon knew that I should not, that I could not, take her at her word. Instinct in such a case teaches a woman what science and experience cannot teach a man.

Towards evening the young monster left me, affecting a sad, mortified, and downcast air, saying: 'I hope you will come to me when you come to yourself.'

I must admit here, in all humility, the metamorphosis which love wrought in me here in London at the age of thirty-eight. I consider this as the end of the first act of my life. The curtain fell on the second act when I left Venice, in 1785, twenty years later. The third and last act will probably be played out here, where I am amusing myself with writing these Memoirs. My comedy will then be finished. If it is hissed, I shall not hear, a satisfaction not accorded to all authors; but the reader has not yet come to the last scene of the first act, which is, in my opinion, exceedingly interesting.

In Green Park I met Goudar, who told me he had seen Miss Charpillon, but that she had refused to allow the conversation to be turned in my direction. We dined together, and then went to the house of the well-known Mrs. Walls, where we saw Kitty Fisher, waiting for the Duke of —— to take her to a ball. This Phryne was magnificently dressed, and it is no exaggeration to say she was at that moment wearing twenty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds. Goudar said if I liked to profit by the opportunity, it would not cost me more than ten guineas. I was not tempted, for though she was very charming, she only spoke English, and I liked to gratify all my senses at once. Mrs. Walls told us that one day this Kitty swallowed a thousand-pound bank-note on a slice of bread-and-butter. The note had just been given her by Atkins, brother of the beautiful Mrs. Pitt. I do not know whether the bank expressed its gratitude for this present.

I passed an hour with a pretty Irish girl, Nelly, who spoke a little French, and who, wound up by champagne, said and did a thousand amusing things; but the image of Miss Charpillon pursued me and made everything seem insipid. Reason told me I must put the creature out of my head, but something, which I wrongly supposed to be a sense of honour, determined me not to give up till at least I had forced her to return the notes of hand.

As luck would have it, Malingan invited me to dinner.

He told me the names of the other guests, and I accepted. There were two young women from Liége there, and one or two others, in all an agreeable company. I was enjoying their society, when in came my evil genius, Miss Charpillon. 'I should not have come had I known you had visitors,' she said gaily to Malingan; 'but if I am in the way you must tell me.'

Every one declared her heartily welcome, but I remained dumb and ill at ease. She was placed on my right, and I had already begun my soup, or I should have left.

The ladies from Liége, with their cavaliers, were leaving for Ostend in a few days. One of them remarked how sorry she was not to have seen Richmond; whereupon I asked her to allow me the honour of taking her there next day, including her husband and the rest of the company in my invitation, with the exception of Miss Charpillon, whom I pretended not to see.

'I will order two carriages with four places each, to be ready at eight o'clock,' I said, 'and as it happens, there are just eight of us.'

'There are nine of us,' cried Miss Charpillon, looking at me in the most brazen manner, 'for I hope you won't send me away if I come?'

'Certainly not; it would be most impolite. I will precede you on horseback.'

'Not at all; I will take Miss Emily on my knee.'

Emily was Malingan's daughter, and as everybody thought the arrangement delightful, I had not the courage to resist. As I was leaving the house the impudent girl stopped me in the hall, and declared I had grossly insulted her, and that if I did not make her amends she would be revenged in a manner which I should feel deeply.

'Give me back my notes.'

'You shall have them to-morrow, but you must first make me forget your insults.'

We set out at eight o'clock; the weather was superb, although it was in the autumn. I ordered a good dinner,

and in the meantime we strolled about the palace and the gardens. At dinner Miss Charpillon sat next to me, and from her behaviour the others must have imagined we were on terms of perfect intimacy. After dinner we returned to the gardens, when she took my arm, and succeeded in drawing me into the Maze. She pulled me down on the grass beside her, lavishing ardent expressions of love on me, and the most passionate caresses. Her bright eyes, her crimson cheeks, her panting breaths, moved me deeply. I was softened; I begged pardon for my haste and brutality, putting it down to excess of love; but she checked me suddenly.

'Enough, my friend, for the present. I swear I will come to you to-night.'

I was past reason; I was no longer master of myself. I held her down with my left arm, and drawing a little knife from my pocket, I opened it with my teeth, and pressing the point to her throat, I swore I would kill her.

'Do as you like,' she said calmly, 'only don't kill me. But I vow I will not go from here; you will have to drag or carry me by force to the carriage, and I will let every one know why.'

The threat was unnecessary. I had recovered my senses. I took my hat and cane, and hastened away from a place where unruly passion had drawn me to within an ace of ruin. Would any one believe it? the shameless woman came up and slipped her arm through mine, in the most natural and innocent way in the world.

A girl of seventeen could not possibly have been versed in this style of trickery, unless she had tried and proved her strength in a hundred combats. They all wanted to know if I had fainted from the heat; but no one noticed any change in her.

We went back to town. I said I had a violent headache, took off my hat to the company, and went home. I wrote to the mother of Miss Charpillon advising her to send me the notes at once, or I would institute proceedings against her. This was her reply:—

'I am surprised, sir, that you should venture to ask me for the two notes you confided to my daughter. She tells me she will return them to you in person when you have become calmer, and have learned to be respectful.'

The sight of this impertinent letter made my blood boil. I forgot all my good resolutions, and putting my pistols in my pocket, I started off, determined to revenge myself, and to oblige the wretched woman to return the notes, even if I had to take a stick to her.

My pistols, I need hardly say, were to protect myself against the scoundrels who were always hanging about her house. Just as I approached the door, I saw it open to admit a certain hairdresser, a good-looking young man, who put her head in curl-papers every Saturday.

I was not anxious that a stranger should witness the scene I was meditating, and I walked on to the corner of the street, where I waited. In about half an hour Rostaing and Caumont, the two bullies, *habitués* of the old woman, came out. Eleven o'clock struck, and still the handsome barber had not left. A little before midnight a servant came out with a lanthorn, evidently to look for something which had fallen from one of the windows. I stepped past her noiselessly and opened the parlour door, and sadly startled Miss Charpillon and the hairdresser!

When she saw me, the wench jumped up with a wild screech. I belaboured her minion with my cane, and at the sound of their cries, the mother, the aunts, and the servants rushed in, and the fellow profited by the confusion to make good his escape. Miss Charpillon had clambered over the sofa back, and there she remained during the scuffle, crouching against the wall, hardly daring to breathe, or protest against the shower of blows which fell on her lover. The three old women fell on me like furies, but they only added fuel to the flames. In my rage I smashed the painted panel and the china I had given the strumpet, the furniture of the room, and in my madness I turned on them, and should have broken their heads had they not ceased their yelling.

At last I flung myself on the sofa, exhausted, and ordered the mother to bring me my notes of hand, but at this moment the night watchman appeared.

The night watch in London consists of one man, who promenades a given quarter, with a lanthorn in one hand and a long staff in the other. On this man alone depends the peace and tranquillity of a section of the immense city. No one thinks of treating him disrespectfully. I put two or three crowns in his hands, saying: 'Go away,' and shut the door in his face.

When I again demanded the notes, the mother answered, 'My daughter has them.'

'Call her.'

The two servants then said that while I was breaking the china she had run out at the street door, and they did not know where she had gone. At these words the old women began to cry and shed tears.

'At midnight! alone in the streets of London! my poor daughter! my poor niece! and in the state of undress in which she is! She is lost. Cursed be the day when you set foot in England, to make us all miserable.'

My rage was now somewhat abated, and I could not help shuddering at the idea of the poor frightened girl rushing wildly through the streets of the vast city.

'Go!' said I to the servants, 'and look for her; when you tell me she is in safety, I will give you each a guinea.'

When the three Gorgons saw I was anxious about Miss Charpillon, their complaints and reproaches began again. As I held my tongue, they thought it as good as an admission that I was to blame. By and by the servants returned; they had been to all the neighbours, they said, but could not find her. I was simple enough to express regret; I implored the women to search for her diligently, and to let me know as soon as they had news of her, that I might fling myself at her feet, and never see her more. I promised I would replace everything I had injured, and would abandon

the notes of hand to them, and even give them a receipt for the amount.

Having acted in this weak and disgraceful manner, having asked forgiveness from abominable procuresses, who were laughing at me in their sleeves, I left, promising two guineas to the servant who should first announce to me the return of her young mistress.

The watchman was waiting for me at the door; he accompanied me home. It was two o'clock in the morning when I flung myself trembling and weeping on my bed.

Six hours later, one of the servants knocked at my door. Miss Charpillon, she said, had returned in a sedan-chair; she had passed the night in a shop which she had found open, the keeper of which knew her slightly. She was in bed, in a high fever; it was feared that a serious illness would result from fright and exposure. I waited three hours longer, and then timidly presented myself at her house. One of the aunts opened the door. Miss Charpillon was delirious, she said, and called out incessantly: '"Here is Seingalt, here is my murderer; he is going to kill me! Save me, save me!" In God's name, sir, go away.'

I passed the whole day without eating, the night without sleeping, talking away to my own night-cap like a madman. The next morning I was told she was still delirious, and the doctor had declared that unless there was a change for the better, she could not live twenty-four hours.

'Miserable barber!' I cried.

'Can't you overlook the follies of youth? You should have pretended not to have seen,' said her aunt.

'By all the gods! You old witch, do you think that possible? However, let her want for nothing; here is a ten-pound note.'

I walked away like a lunatic, not knowing whither I went. On the third day, as I was pacing up and down beneath her windows, at seven o'clock in the morning, the mother spoke to me, and said her daughter as dying. At the same moment a tall, thin, pale old man came out of the

house; he told her, in German, that she must resign herself to the will of God. I asked if he were the doctor.

'There is no more need of a doctor,' she answered; 'he is a minister of the Gospel, and there is another one with her now; in an hour, perhaps, my poor daughter will be no more.'

I felt a hand of ice laid on my heart, but I said, 'I may be, possibly, the actual cause of her death; but it is you, wretched old woman, who have killed her.'

I returned home slowly; my legs seemed incapable of supporting my body; my mind was made up, I would seek death by the surest means.

I ordered my servants to admit no one. I locked myself in my room. I put my watches, rings, snuff-boxes, diamonds, and other valuables into my secretary, and addressed them to the Venetian consul, to whom I wrote a letter, saying that after my death everything was to go to M. de Bragadin. I took a few guineas and some silver in my purse, my pistols in my pocket, and went out with the firm intention of drowning myself in the Thames, where it flows past the Tower of London.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE TALKING PARROT

Love or anger had ceased to have dominion over me. I was in the full possession of my reason, and bent on suicide. I went into a shop and bought as many leaden bullets as my pockets would hold, to weigh me down in the water. I walked along slowly, because of the enormous weight, pondering my project as I went. The more I thought of it, the more inevitable did it seem to me. I could not live and be tortured every day by the reproachful image of Miss Charpillon; and I felt a secret pride in thinking that I was courageous enough to punish myself for my crime.

Half way across Westminster Bridge, I met an Englishman named Edgar, a rich, handsome, and amiable young fellow, who enjoyed life to the utmost. I tried to avoid him, but he came up to me, and took me by the arm.

'Where are you going? Come along with me, you will see some fun.'

'I can't, my dear fellow; let me go.'

'What is the matter? Why do you look so solemn?'

'Nothing is the matter.'

'Nothing! You ought to see yourself in the glass; you are on the way, I am sure, to do something foolish.'

'You are mistaken; good-bye. I'll go with you some other day.'

'My dear Seingalt, you've got the blue devils, and they don't suit you at all. If you don't come with me, I shall go with you. I won't leave you the whole of this blessed afternoon.'

At this moment his eye fell on my breeches pocket; he

calmly put his hand in, and drew out one of my pistols, searched the other pocket and found the second.

'Going to fight a duel, I suppose? All right; I've no objection, but I shan't leave you.'

I tried to smile, and answered him that I was only walking about town to amuse myself.

'Well, I hope my society will be as agreeable to you as yours is to me,' he replied, 'for I mean to walk with you. After our promenade we will dine at the "Canon." I will tell a girl who was going to dine with me to bring a French friend of hers, and we shall be a *partie carrée*.'

'My dear Edgar, do let me off, I am not feeling gay; I want to be alone and get rid of my spleen.'

'You can be alone to-morrow. In three hours your spleen will have disappeared; if not, I will help you to get rid of it. Where were you thinking of dining across the water?'

'Nowhere. I am not hungry. I have been fasting for three days; I can only drink.'

'There is something queer in all this, but I begin to see daylight. Some trouble has stirred up your bile; you may go mad, or die as one of my brothers did. I must see to it.'

He would not be denied, and I went with him, saying to myself, 'One day more or less, what does it matter?'

I am as certain that all those who have killed themselves on account of some great sorrow have done so because they foresaw the approaching loss of reason, as I am sure that those who have gone mad could only have avoided this calamity by death. When I made up my mind to kill myself, my folly was at its height; a day longer, and I should have been a raving maniac. And from this it is to be deduced that man should never kill himself, because from one day to another the cause of his grief may be removed, as mine was. I had lost all hope; I was about to die, and I only owed my life to chance.

Edgar persuaded me to turn back with him, but after half an hour I was obliged to ask him to take me somewhere to rest. I was so dead beat I could hardly drag my

feet along; and the lead in my pockets weighed me down. Edgar took me to a tavern, and only left me when I had given him my word I would await his return. As soon as I was alone I hid the bullets in a cupboard. Edgar returned, accompanied by two girls, one French, and both endowed by nature with charm. They thought me a surly fellow, till I begged Edgar to tell them that had I not been half dead, I should have found them delightful. A man who has spent three times twenty-four hours without eating or sleeping is not highly impressionable; but as soon as they learned my name, their opinion changed. They evidently knew me by reputation, and were most respectful. They all hoped that Bacchus and Comus would plead for Cupid, but, I knew their hopes were vain.

We dined *à l'anglaise*, that is to say, without soup; and I could only swallow a dozen oysters, with some good Grave wine. As I had not sufficient money to pay my share, I was obliged to borrow from Edgar, and this forced me to postpone my suicide; and partly from weariness, partly from indifference, I allowed him to drag me to Ranelagh.

We walked about the Rotunda, our hats pulled over our eyes, our arms crossed behind each others' backs, as was the fashion in those days. A minuet was going on, and I stopped to watch a woman who was dancing very well. I could not see her face, but her dress and hat seemed strangely familiar, absolutely like what I had bought for Miss Charpillon some days before. But Miss Charpillon was dead, or dying?

The dancer turned to cross the floor, raised her head. It was she!

Edgar told me afterwards he thought I was going to fall down in an epileptic fit. With a tremendous effort I steadied myself; my eyes must have deceived me; the dance was over, as she was making her curtsy to her partner. I stepped forward, as though to invite her to promenade with me. She looked at me and fled. I sat down, trembling in every limb. A cold sweat broke out over my face and body. I prayed

Edgar to leave me to myself for a little while; my heart was beating so that I could not stand.

The crisis was over; it had not killed me, it had given me new life. When Edgar came back, he found me watching the crowd with apparent interest.

'My dear fellow, you are laughing; have the blue devils departed?'

'They have, and I am starving, but before we go to supper I want to ask you something. I owe you my life, *my life*, do you understand, and to make my gratitude to you complete, will you spend to-night and to-morrow with me?'

He agreed and came home with me. They served us a good supper, which I ate, or rather devoured; after which I slept till noon next day. Over our chocolate I told Edgar the whole story, the *dénouement* of which would have been so fatal but for my meeting with him on Westminster Bridge. He assured me I could have the mother arrested, as she had acknowledged her debt in her letter to me, and I resolved to take his advice. Before we parted we swore eternal friendship, and on my part it was the least I could offer. Yet for his kindness he paid dear!

Next day I went to the attorney whom I had already employed in my affairs with Count Schwerin. He told me I was in the right, and could arrest the mother and the aunts. Without losing time I applied to a magistrate for a warrant, and then to a bailiff; but this latter was unacquainted with the females. He could go into their house, and serve the warrant on them, but he must be certain first of their identity. Not knowing who to charge with this delicate mission, I decided to conduct him myself.

I met him at eight o'clock in Denmark Street. I followed him into the parlour where the three hags were sitting. After pointing them out, I left the room hastily, for Charpillon, dressed in black, was standing by the fire-place, and she cast a glance at me which made me shiver. I thought I was cured, and I was cured, but the wound had been deep

and was hardly scarred over. I do not know what would have happened had this Circe had the presence of mind to fling herself in my arms, and ask for mercy for her mother and her aunts. I heard afterwards from Goudar that the women had resisted, and that their bullies had come to their assistance, and even drawn their swords, but the bailiff and his men disarmed them. He added that he meant to go and see them in prison, and that if I would consent to compromise, he would gladly act as mediator. My answer was that they must pay me my six thousand francs, and that they might think themselves lucky that I did not claim interest and damages.

For a fortnight I heard nothing of this matter, except that Miss Charpillon paid their expenses in prison, where they had two rooms, and that she declared she would never ask me to set them at liberty, though she knew she had but to do so, and I should consent.

All this time I had not seen Edgar, when one morning he appeared in my room, smiling.

'Where have you been all this time?' I asked.

'Love has kept me in his most impenetrable prison. I have brought you some money from Madame Anspergher. Give me a receipt for it, for I have promised this very morning to restore her and her sisters to poor Miss Charpillon, who has cried for fifteen days without stopping.'

'I can understand her tears, and I admire her cleverness in chosing you for her protector.'

'She knew nothing, until I told her, except that we were together at Ranelagh, where you saw her with Lord Grosvenor.'

'She asked you no doubt to intercede for her?'

'On the contrary, she says you are a monster of ingratitude, for she loved you, and proved her affection for you, but now she detests you.'

'God be praised! But I am sorry she has chosen you as her emissary; you will suffer for it.'

'May be I shall, but at any rate it will be very pleasant. I am in love with her.'

Edgar counted out the money; I gave him the receipt, and he went off well pleased. Was I not justified in believing that all was now at an end between Miss Charpillon and me? I flattered myself!

Just at this time the hereditary Prince of Brunswick, who is now the reigning duke, married the king's sister. The common councillors having bestowed on him the freedom of the city, he was admitted into the guild of goldsmiths, and was given his diploma, by the lord mayor and aldermen, in a magnificent golden box. The prince, who was the first gentleman of Europe, did not disdain to add this new title to his fourteen centuries of nobility.

Lady Harrington organised a grand ball at Madam Cornelys. A thousand persons were admitted at three guineas a head. The bride and bridegroom, and all the royal family, except the king and queen, were there. I was among the number, but had to stand up with six hundred others, for there was only room at table for four hundred.

I saw Lady Grafton seated by the Duke of Cumberland. She wore her own hair, without powder, cut straight across her forehead. The other ladies were scandalised, crying out that the coiffure was hideous; in less than six months, *la coiffure à la Grafton*, became general, crossed the Channel, and spread throughout Europe, where, unfairly enough, its name was changed. The mode still exists; it is the only one which has lasted thirty years in spite of its having been hissed at its birth.

Three thousand guineas were spent on this ball. There was every kind of amusement going, but as I did not dance, and was not in love with any of the ladies, I left at one o'clock in the morning. It was a Sunday, a day on which none but criminals need fear the law in England. But this is what happened to me.

I was smartly dressed, and was driving home in my carriage, with my negro Jarbe, and another servant behind,

when as I turned into my street I heard a voice call out: 'Good night, Seingalt.' Putting my head out of the window to answer, I saw I was surrounded by armed men, one of whom said: 'By order of the king.'

On my demanding what they wanted, they replied: 'To take you to Newgate prison; Sunday doesn't protect criminals.'

'And what is my offence?'

'You will know when you get there.'

'My master,' said Jarbe, 'has a right to know now.'

'The judge is asleep.'

Jarbe insisted, however, and the passers-by, learning what was the matter, declared he was right. The chief of the band then proposed to take me to his house in the city, which I agreed to. We went into a big room, where there were benches and tables. My servants stayed with me, and the six policemen, who told me I ought to stand them something to eat and drink. I told Jarbe to see that they were satisfied. As I had committed no crime, I was quite easy in my mind, besides I knew that in London one could always get justice, and get it quickly. I thought on the strange transition, which had brought me, dressed like a prince, from a brilliant assembly, to an infamous den like this. In the morning the master of the house came in, and was furious that I had been left in the common room all night; had I been given a bedroom, he would have been the richer by a guinea. Finally, they told me it was time for me to present myself in court. A chair was sent for, for I did not dare to walk out in my gorgeous costume.

There were about sixty people in the hall, who stared in astonishment at the barbarian who dared to appear before his judge in such luxuriant attire. At the end of the room I saw a man on a raised seat; it was the judge, and the judge was blind! A wide bandage was tied round his head and over his eyes. Some one who was standing near me guessed I was a foreigner, and said in French: 'Don't be alarmed, Mr. Fielding is an honest and upright judge.'

I thanked the benevolent unknown, and I was charmed to see before me an amiable and intellectual man, known to me as the author of many works of which England is proud.

When my turn came, his secretary told him my name, and Mr. Fielding said in very good Italian: 'Signor Casanova, have the goodness to come nearer; I wish to speak to you.'

Delighted that he should address me in my own language, I went up to the bar, and said, '*Eccomi, signor.*'

He went on, in Italian: 'Monsieur Casanova, Venetian, you are condemned to perpetual imprisonment, in one of the prisons of his Majesty the King of Great Britain.'

'May I not know for what crime I am condemned?'

'Your curiosity is right and natural; in our country justice condemns no one without letting him know the reason of his condemnation. You have been accused, and the accusation has been supported by two witnesses, of having tried to disfigure a young and pretty girl. This young lady asks to be protected against further outrage, and justice can find no better means of protecting her than by keeping you in prison, *in vitam æternam*. So get ready to go there.'

'Sir, the accusation is absolutely calumnious, I swear it. If the girl reflects on her own behaviour, she may with reason fear that I might be tempted to ill-treat her, but I can swear to you that I have not done so as yet, nor do I intend to do so.'

'She has two witnesses.'

'They are false. May I ask the name of my accuser?'

'Miss Charpillon.'

'I know her. I have given her nothing but marks of affection.'

'It is not true, then, that you wished to disfigure her?'

'No, most certainly not!'

'In that case, I congratulate you; you can go home to dinner, provided you can find two people willing to go bail for you. They must be two householders, and must answer

for you that you will never attempt to commit such a crime.'

'Who will venture to be surety for that?'

'Two Englishmen whose good opinion and esteem you have gained, and who are prepared to swear you are not a scoundrel. If they appear before I go to dinner, I will set you at liberty at once.'

I was taken back to the place where I had passed the night. I wrote to all the householders, who were likely to help me, explaining why I was obliged to ask their help, and despatched these letters by my servants. I told them to make haste; they were to come back before noon. But London is so big! They did not come back, and the magistrate went to his dinner. I hoped he would return in the afternoon.

By and by, the head policeman, accompanied by an interpreter, came to tell me he had orders to take me to Newgate, the prison where the most miserable and abject criminals are confined. I told him I was waiting for bail, and that he could take me to Newgate [1] in the evening if it did not come; but he turned a deaf ear to my remonstrances. The interpreter told me in a low voice that this man was certainly paid by my adversaries to cause me as much trouble as possible, but that I could easily bribe him.

'How much must I give him?'

The two men whispered together for a minute, then the interpreter told me that for ten guineas the other would allow me to remain where I was.

'Thank you; tell him I am curious to see the inside of Newgate.'

A coach was fetched, and I was driven off.

On my arrival at this place of desolation, a veritable hell, worthy of the imagination of Dante, a crowd of poor wretches, some of whom were to be hanged within a week,

[1] Either Casanova was mistaken in the name of the judge who tried him, or in that of the prison where he was tried. Sir John Fielding was assistant magistrate to his brother Henry, who sat for Westminster and Middlesex till 1754, when Henry Fielding died and his office devolved on his brother. The Middlesex Sessions in his day were held at Clerkenwell.

pressed round me and saluted me mockingly. Seeing that I did not answer, they became insulting. The gaoler appeased them by saying I was a foreigner, and did not understand a word of English. He took me into a room by myself, and told me what it would cost me, and what the prison rules were, as if he were sure I should remain there a long time. But half an hour after, the individual who had tried to make me pay a ransom of ten guineas came to say that bail had been found, that my sponsors were waiting at the court, and my carriage was at the gate.

I thanked God from the bottom of my heart. I was again in the presence of the man with the bandaged eyes. I saw Mr. Pegu, my tailor, and Maisonneuve, my wine merchant, who both said they were glad to render me this service. A little way off, I saw Charpillon with the infamous Rostaing, and Goudar. I contented myself with casting a withering glance at them. When my sponsors had signed the caution, the judge said in a most affable tone: 'Signor de Casanova, will you sign this too, and then you will be absolutely at liberty.'

I asked what the amount of the bail was, and was told it was forty guineas, twenty guineas each. As I was signing it, I said to Goudar, that if the magistrate had been able to see, he might have valued Miss Charpillon's beauty at ten thousand guineas.

Before leaving I bowed to the judge respectfully, though he could not see me, and asked the clerk of the court if I owed anything for costs. His negative reply gave rise to a dispute between him and Miss Charpillon's attorney, who was mortified at not being able to make me pay the expenses of my capture.

As I was going out, I met five or six well-known Englishmen, who had come to go bail for me, and who were quite disappointed at not having been there in time. They begged me to be indulgent to the English laws, which were often inconvenient for foreigners.

So, after one of the most tiresome days of my life, I got

home at last, to laugh at my adventure, and put off my fine clothes and go to bed.

I was walking one morning in a part of London known as the 'Parrot Market,' where I noticed a young and particularly handsome bird. I bought it, cage and all, for ten guineas. I had it placed near my bed, and as I wanted it to say something striking, I repeated to it a hundred times a day, 'Miss Charpillon is more infamous than her mother!'

I had no other object but my own amusement, and in fifteen days the little beast repeated this sentence with the most ridiculous precision, adding a screech of laughter on its own account. Goudar, delighted, said that if I sent it down to the exchange, I could surely sell it for a hundred guineas. It struck me that this would be a noble revenge on the wretch who had so shamefully misused me. I confided the bird to Jarbe; he was a nigger, and it was natural he should deal in such wares. For the first two or three days my parrot's cry was not taken any notice of, as it spoke in French, but once it had attracted the attention of some one understanding both language and allusion, the indiscreet fowl drew a large audience, and men began to bid for it. Fifty guineas seemed a high price, and my nigger wanted me to sell it for less, but I would not.

I nearly died with laughter when Goudar told me of the effect produced by the parrot in the Charpillon family. They had recognised Jarbe; they knew who the bird belonged to, and who had been its teacher. Charpillon, it seemed, thought my revenge a very neat one, but the old women were furious. They had already consulted lawyers, who told them that the law of libel could not be applied to a parrot, but I could be made to pay dearly for the joke, if it could be proved that the bird was my pupil. Goudar said I had better not boast of my achievement, as two witnesses would be enough to ruin me. The ease with which false witnesses can be picked up in London is a sad and degrading fact. I have myself seen a board hung outside a window, with the word 'Witness' on it, in capital letters, meaning that there was a

man, who in return for a small sum of money, was willing to swear to anything.

An article appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, saying that the ladies who had the right to consider themselves insulted by the talkative parrot at the Exchange must be either very poor or very friendless, as no one had come forward to buy the impertinent creature. It added 'Whoever trained the parrot, did so, no doubt, with a view to revenge; it is in excellent taste, and he deserves to be an Englishman.'

I asked Edgar why he did not buy the little scandal-monger, and he said it was because the bird was the delight of all who were acquainted with the lady. From which I inferred that he had come off no better than I with her. At last Lord Grosvenor bought the bird for fifty guineas to please Miss Charpillon.

I never spoke to the girl again. I saw her several times afterwards, but always with complete indifference.

My affairs at this time were in a serious state. I had spent in one month all the money I had received by the sale of my jewels, and I was four hundred guineas in debt. I sold my diamond cross, six or seven gold snuff-boxes, all my watches except one, and two big trunks full of clothes. When I had paid my housekeeping bills, I had eighty pounds left over; all that remained of a fine fortune which I had dissipated like a fool, or like a sage, or a mixture of both.

I left the beautiful house in which I had led such a merry life, and took a humble lodging at a guinea a week, attended only by my negro, whom I believed to be faithful. I then wrote to M. de Bragadin, asking him to remit me two hundred sequins. I was sure of getting money from Venice, for I had not drawn any for over five years, and I waited calmly. About a fortnight after the departure of the Hanoverians, and towards the end of February, I went to dine at the 'Canon' tavern, as I often did. Just as I was sitting down to table, the Baron von Stenau came in, and begged me to join him and his mistress in the adjoining room. She

was an Englishwoman, whom I had already met, and who spoke Italian well. We dined together very gaily. Towards the end of dinner she took up a dice-box. 'Let us throw for a guinea,' she said; 'the winner shall spend it on oysters and champagne.' After which, 'Let us throw again, whoever loses shall pay for the dinner.' She lost.

Not wishing to remain in her debt, I proposed to throw with the baron; he threw and lost, lost again, and after half an hour he owed me a hundred guineas.

'My dear baron,' I said, 'luck is against you, you had better leave off.'

With a curse at the luck, and at me for wanting to spare him, he got up, took his hat and stick, and going to the door said: 'When I come back I shall pay you.'

As soon as he was gone the woman said, 'I am sure you meant to go halves with me?'

'Certainly,' said I laughing, 'I will give you fifty guineas when the baron pays me.'

By and by he came back.

'I have been to the bank,' he said, 'to get this letter of credit cashed, and though it is drawn on one of the first houses in Lisbon, they refused to give me the money.'

I took the letter, which was endorsed, and I saw that the figures ran into millions. The baron, with a smile at my surprise, explained that these millions were Portuguese *milreis*, making in all about five hundred pounds sterling.

'If the signature is a good one, I can get it cashed to-morrow,' I said.

'In that case I will make it payable to your order.'

He gave me his address and we parted. I took the letter next morning to Bosanquet, who said that his employer, Mr. Leigh, wanted some letters on Cadiz. On looking at the one I had, he declared it was better than gold, and counted me out five hundred and twenty guineas, after I had put my name to it. The baron paid me my hundred guineas, and we dined together.

A week after this good action I was taken ill. I was

already harassed and troubled with difficulties of every kind, and I was on the eve of a long sea-voyage. I determined to go to the house of some good surgeon and remain there till I was cured. With a view to this, I packed up my trunks; the greater part of my linen, however, was at my washer-woman's, who lived some six miles out of London, and who washed for all the first families in town. The very day I was going to the surgeon's, I received a letter from Leigh, containing these words:—

'The letter of credit you gave me was a forgery. You must repay me at once the five hundred and twenty guineas I gave you for it; if the man who gave it to you does not reimburse you, have him arrested, but for pity's sake do not force me to arrest you, as your life would be involved.'

For once in my life I was glad to be alone. I flung myself on my bed, and broke out into a cold sweat. I trembled like a leaf; I saw the gallows before me. There was no one in London who would give me five hundred guineas; given a month's delay, I could get the money from Venice, but I knew how such things were managed in England. I should be tried, condemned, and perhaps hanged before I could receive a reply from my friends. A burning fever took the place of my cold terror. With two loaded pistols in my pockets, I went off to the Baron von Stenau's, determined to blow out his brains if he did not give me back the money. When I got to his house I was told he had left for Lisbon three days before. I may mention that he was hanged in Lisbon four months later.

I was now in a terrible position. I had only twelve guineas in my pocket; I must raise some money somehow. I dared not go to Bosanquet, or Vanhel, or Salvador, who might already have got wind of the affair, so I went to a small Venetian banker named Trèves, who had been recommended to me by Count Algaroti of Venice. I got him to discount a letter of credit for a hundred sequins, drawn on Dandolo. Leigh had given me twenty-four hours, and I knew the honest Englishman would be as good as his word. I did not

want to lose my linen or three fine suits of clothes which were at my tailor's, still I had no time for shillyshallying. I asked Jarbe if he would rather I should make him a present of twenty guineas and dismiss him there and then from my service, or if he would prefer to remain with me and join me somewhere or other a week later.

'I would rather remain in your service,' he said, 'and join you wherever you may be. When do you leave?'

'In an hour, but my life depends on your silence.'

'Why do you not take me with you?'

'Because I want you to bring my linen and my clothes. I will give you the money for your livery.'

'I do not need it; you can repay what I spend when I join you.' Saying this, he went out of the room, and returned with sixty guineas in a bag.

'Take this, sir, please, I have credit here, and can get as much again if I need it.'

'Thank you, thank you, my friend, but I do not need it, though I shall never forget your devotion.'

I paid up a week's rent in lieu of notice, said good-bye to Jarbe, and went off with Daturi, a godson of mine who had claimed acquaintance. I am not sure he wasn't my son. I had lent him money when I had it to lend. I was so ill that we were obliged to stop all night at Rochester. I was in a high fever and almost delirious, and owed my life to Daturi's kind care. On his own authority, he sent for a surgeon and had me bled, which I am convinced saved me from apoplexy. We arrived at Dover early next morning, and had only half an hour in that town, as the packet was sailing at once. We got to Calais in six hours, and I went to the 'Bras d'Or,' and straight to bed. I was now so ill that my life was in danger; on the third day I was at death's door. I was bled a second, a third, and a fourth time, after which I fell into a stupor, from which I did not revive for over twenty-four hours. It was fifteen days before I could leave my bed.

I was terribly weak, and very sad and downcast, humili-

ated at the manner of my flight from London, indignant at Jarbe's infidelity, and angry at having to give up the idea of going to Portugal. Daturi was my only consolation; he waited on me like a son, and a servant combined.

At Wesel I met the English general, Beckw——; he bought my post-chaise from me, as the horses of the country I was now entering are not accustomed to shafts. He was garrisoned at Wesel, and he persuaded me to consult his doctor, Dr. Pipers. This young man, who was kindness itself, advised me to take up my abode at his house, promising that his mother and sisters would nurse me, and that in six weeks I should be completely cured. I was carried there in a bath-chair, holding a handkerchief over my face, for I was ashamed to let the ladies see me. Daturi undressed me and put me to bed.

The young doctor's medicaments were most efficacious; in one month I was all right, though I was as thin as a skeleton. My poor Daturi was less fortunate, for during my illness he made friends with the soldiers of the guard, and then fell out with them. They set upon him, and beat him so ferociously, that he was brought home in a pitiable state, covered with blood, and with three teeth knocked out. As soon as he was well enough, I sent him off to Brunswick with a letter to General Salmon. The teeth he had lost made it impossible for him to be forced to enlist, which was some small consolation.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE GREAT FREDERICK

MADAME DE RUMAIN, who had heard I wanted money, sent me a hundred florins, which I received the day before I left Wesel. She said I could pay her back at my convenience, but, unfortunately, she died before I was able to do so.

I was not rich, and in very poor health, otherwise I should have stayed longer in Brunswick, for the city delighted me. It was *en fête*, as the Prince Royal of Prussia had just arrived from Potsdam to visit his future wife, the daughter of the reigning duke, whom he married the following year. The Court was giving the most magnificent entertainments, to which the hereditary prince, who is now sovereign of the duchy, did me the honour to invite me. I had met him at Madam Cornelys's in Soho Square.

The prince had a small army of six thousand infantry, all very well set up. These troops were to pass in review on a plain some distance from the city, and I went to see them; it rained the whole time. There were a great many people there: many ladies in fine toilettes, all the nobility, and many foreigners. I saw the Honourable Miss Chudleigh among others, and she did me the honour of speaking to me, and asking me when I had left London. She was dressed in a simple robe of Indian muslin, and could have had nothing under it but a thin batiste chemise. She got wet through with the rain, and the thin garments clung to her beautiful form till she might as well, or better, have been naked, but she did not seem to mind. The other ladies sheltered from the deluge in tents.

I had occasion to discount a letter at Brunswick, and

gave it to a Jew, who let me have the amount, less two per cent. The letter was to the order of the Chevalier de Seingalt, and naturally I endorsed it in this name. The following day the Jew came and told me I must return him the money, or find him bail for the amount, until he heard from the banker on whom it was drawn. I told him to leave me in peace, he had nothing to fear; but he replied, insolently, that he must have the money or the guarantee, adding, 'for you are well known here.' At these words the blood flew to my head, and seizing my cane I gave him a sound thrashing.

Next day, when I was walking in the town, I met the prince, accompanied only by a groom.

'So you are going to leave us, chevalier,' he said.

'In two or three days, your highness.'

'So I heard from a Jew, who came to complain to me that you had beaten him because he asked for a guarantee of a letter of credit he had cashed for you.'

'Your highness, I own I acted hastily, but I could not, in reason, be expected to withdraw my letter, or give him bail for it; he insulted me by asking such a thing.'

'He says he would not have cashed it had you not mentioned my name; and that you signed it with a name which does not belong to you.'

'Both accusations are false, your highness. The name of Seingalt is very truly mine.'

'Well, anyhow, we have to deal with a Jew who has been beaten, and who fears to be cheated. He would like you to remain here till he hears from Amsterdam if your letter be genuine or not, but I shall take it out of his hands this morning; so you are free to leave when you like. *Au revoir*, chevalier, and *bon voyage!*'

So saying, the prince rode off without giving me time to answer. I might have told him that he was casting a slur on my integrity, by taking my letter out of the Jew's hands, and that I should prefer his not interfering in the matter. It is not enough for a prince to be kind-hearted, generous,

and magnanimous, as was the Duke of Brunswick. He ought to have tact as well, and refrain from wounding the feelings of the person to whom he wishes to be civil.

Profoundly hurt, I walked slowly away, pondering the prince's speech, especially over his *bon voyage!* In a royal mouth such words sounded very much like an order to depart. After reflection I determined that I would neither go nor stay, so I packed my trunks, paid my bill, and without bidding farewell to any one, went off to Wolfenbüttel with the intention of remaining a week there, and then returning to Brunswick; this I thought a good way out of my difficulty. It was soothing to my dignity, and at the same time agreeable, as Wolfenbüttel then possessed the third greatest library in the world. I was sure I should not be dull.

The amiable librarian not only placed a man at my disposal to find any books I might require, but actually allowed me to study magnificent manuscripts at my own rooms.

(I carried away from Wolfenbüttel many notions about the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which are not to be found in any treatise on these works, and of which the great Pope himself was ignorant. A part is to be found in my translation of the *Iliad;* the rest will remain here, and will probably be lost with my other documents, for I shall not burn my papers, not even these Memoirs, though I have often thought and spoken of doing so.)

I was delighted to find on my return to Brunswick that no one knew I had been away; it was supposed in the town that I had withdrawn the letter of credit from the Jew's hands. The time had come now for him to have received the reply from Amsterdam, and I was not astonished to see the son of Israel appear while I was dining with several friends, and humbly beg my pardon for having doubted the validity of my signature.

'You have been sufficiently punished,' I said; and with a profound bow he withdrew.

From Brunswick I went to Magdeburg, and then on to

Berlin, without stopping at Potsdam, as the king was not there. The roads are terrible in Prussia; they were in so bad a state, that it took me three days to do eight miserable little German miles. Prussia is a country in which gold and industry could achieve marvels, but I doubt if it will ever become a prosperous country.

The first day of my arrival in Berlin, I went to present my respects to the Lord Marshal, who, since the death of his brother, had become Lord Keith. The last time I had seen him was in London, when he was returning from Scotland, where he had been to retake possession of his estates which had been confiscated because of his devotion to the Stuarts. His rehabilitation was due to the intercession of Frederick the Great. At the time I am writing of, Lord Keith was living in Berlin, resting on his laurels, beloved and cherished by the king, but taking no active part in politics, as he was over eighty years of age, but simple and charming as ever. He received me kindly, and expressed a hope that I should remain some time in Berlin, as he knew, to a certain extent, the vicissitudes of my past life. I replied that I would gladly settle there if the king would give me a suitable appointment; but when I asked him to speak to the king for me, he replied that that would do more harm than good. 'His majesty piques himself on knowing men better than any one else. He likes to judge them himself; sometimes he discovers merit when no one else sees any, and sometimes *vice versa*.'

He advised me to write to the king and beg an interview.

'When you speak to him, you can say that you know me, and he will then probably ask me about you; you may be sure that I shall say nothing but what is to your credit.'

'I, my lord, write to a king to whom I have no introduction? I could not think of it:'

'But you wish to speak to him, do you not?'

'Certainly.'

'That is enough; your letter need contain nothing but the expression of your desire.'

'Will the king answer me?'

'Without doubt, for he answers everybody. He will tell you when it will please him to receive you. Take my advice, and let me know how you get on.'

I did as he suggested, and wrote a simple and respectful letter, asking when and where I might present myself to his majesty. The day but one after I received a reply signed Frederick, acknowledging the receipt of my letter, and saying I should find him at four o'clock that day in the gardens at Sans Souci.

As my readers may imagine, I was delighted at having obtained a rendezvous, and arrived at the palace an hour before the appointed time, very simply dressed in black. I entered the courtyard, and as I did not see any one, not even a sentinel, I went up a short staircase, and opening a door, found myself in a picture-gallery. A guardian came up and offered to show me the collection.

'I did not come here to admire these works of art,' I said, 'but to speak to the king, who told me he would be in the garden.'

'At this moment he is at his concert, playing the flute. 'Tis his dessert after dinner, and he treats himself to it every day. Did he fix any hour?'

'Yes, four o'clock, but he may have forgotten.'

'He never forgets. He will be punctual, and you had better wait for him in the garden.'

I had not been there long, when I saw him approaching, followed by his secretary and a fine spaniel. As soon as he saw me he pronounced my name, at the same time taking off his bad old hat; he then asked, in a terrible voice, what I wanted.

I stood looking at him in silence.

'Well, can't you speak? Isn't it you who wrote to me?'

'Yes, sire; but now I can't remember what I had to say. I did not think the majesty of a king could so dazzle my senses. I shall be better prepared in future. My lord marshal ought to have warned me.'

'Ah! he knows you, does he? Come, let us walk about. What did you wish to say? What do you think of this garden?'

He ordered me to speak of his garden! I should have said I knew nothing of gardens to any one else, but if he chose to think me a connoisseur I must fain pretend to be one. At the risk of exposing my ignorance, I replied that it was superb.

'But,' he said, 'the gardens at Versailles are far finer.'

'I own it, sire; but this is because of the fountains.'

'True; but it is not my fault. There is no water here. I have spent more than three hundred thousand crowns, but without success.'

'Three hundred thousand crowns, sire! If your majesty spent that sum, there should have been abundance of water.'

'Ah! ah! I see you are a hydraulic architect.'

Could I tell him he was mistaken? I was afraid of displeasing him, so I simply bent my head. This could be taken for yes or no. Thank God, he did not continue to talk on this subject, or I should have been terribly put to it, for I did not know the very rudiments of hydraulics.

Still walking up and down, and turning his head right and left, he asked me what the Venetian forces, naval and military, amounted to. Now I was on my own ground. 'Twenty men of war, sire, and a large number of galleys.'

'And what land forces?'

'Seventy thousand men, sire, all subjects of the republic; and counting all that, only one man from each village.'

'That is not true. I suppose you want to amuse me with your fables. You must be a financier; tell me, what do you think of the taxes?'

This was the first interview I had ever had with royalty. Considering his style, his abrupt change of subject, and his sudden digressions, I felt as though I had been called on to act in one of those improvised Italian comedies in which, if the actor stops short for a word, the pit and the gallery hiss him mercilessly. I immediately assumed the style of a

financier and replied that I was acquainted with the theory of taxation.

'That is what I want,' he replied, 'for the practice does not concern you.'

'There are three kinds of taxes, taking into consideration their effects: one is ruinous, one is unfortunately necessary, and the third is always excellent.'

'That is good; go on.'

'The ruinous tax is the royal tax; the necessary one is the military one; and the excellent one is the popular tax.'

I wanted to throw him off his beat a little, as I had not got up my subject.

'The royal tax, sire, is the one which empties the purses of the subjects to swell the coffers of the sovereign.'

'And that is the ruinous one, you say?'

'Always, sire, for it stops the circulation of money, which is the soul of commerce and the backbone of the State.'

'Yet you consider the army tax necessary?'

'Unfortunately necessary, for war is a dire calamity.'

'Perhaps. And how about the popular tax?'

'It is always excellent, for what the king takes from his people with one hand, he gives them back with the other, turning it into useful channels, protecting science and art, and so contributing to the general social well-being; in fact, the king adds to general happiness by employing the money drawn from the taxes as his wisdom dictates.'

'There is a good deal of truth in what you say. No doubt you know Calsabigi?'

'I ought to know him, sire, for we established the Genoese lottery in Paris together, seven years ago.'

'And under what head would you class that tax, if you admit it to be one?'

'It is one, sire, and not one of the least important. It is a good tax, if the king spends the profits in a useful manner.'

'But supposing he loses?'

'One chance in fifty, sire.'

'Is that the result of an exact calculation?'

'As exact, sire, as all political calculations.'

'They are often wrong.'

'They are never wrong, sire, if God remains neutral.'

'Why drag the Deity into such a question?'

'Let us say then, sire, luck, or destiny.'

'That is better. Perhaps I agree with you about the moral calculations, but I do not like your Genoese lottery. It seems to me a mere swindle, and I would not have anything more to do with it, even if I were certain to win always.'

'Your majesty is right, for the public would never support lotteries were they not led away by false security.'

Then he tried one or two other points, but I met him without flinching. Suddenly he stopped short and looked me over from head to foot.

'Do you know that you are a very handsome man?'

'Is it possible, sire, that after a long scientific dissertation, your majesty can credit me with merely the qualities which distinguish your majesty's grenadiers?'

The king smiled, with kind malice, then said: 'As it seems that Lord Keith knows you, I will speak to him about you.'

He then took off his hat again, for he was never chary of his bows, and I, making him a profound reverence, withdrew.

Three or four days after the lord marshal told me the king was very pleased with me, and had said he would try and find me something to do.

I was curious to know what form this employment would take, but there was nothing to do but wait. I was not sorry to remain in Berlin, for time passed pleasantly enough there.

At the time I am writing of, the Duchess of Brunswick, Frederick's sister, paid him a visit. She was accompanied by her daughter, the one who the following year married the Prince Royal of Prussia. On this occasion the king came to Berlin, and ordered a performance of the Italian opera at his little theatre at Charlottenburg. I saw him there, dressed

in a suit of lustrine, with gold braid on all the seams, and black silk stockings. He was really a comical figure, and looked more like a stage grandfather than a mighty monarch. He came into the theatre with his hat under his arm, leading his sister by the hand. Every one was staring at him, for only a few very old men could remember having seen him clad in anything but riding-boots and uniform.

At Potsdam I saw the king commanding the first battalion of grenadiers of the guards in person. This battalion was composed of men chosen for their looks and their bravery. The room in which I lodged at the inn was opposite a corridor, up and down which the king passed when he went to the château. The shutters of the windows in this corridor were always closed, and the landlady told us that once when the pretty dancer Reggiana was lodging in the room we were then occupying, the king chanced to see her through the window *en deshabillé*, and was so shocked that he ordered the shutters to be put up; and though the incident was four years old at the time of our visit they had never been taken down. The king was no doubt afraid of being treated as severely as la Barbarina had treated him. We saw a portrait of this lady in his bedroom, and one of La Cochois, who was the sister of the actress who became the Marquise d'Argens, and one of the Empress Maria Theresa, with whom he had been in love, principally, I imagine, from a desire to call himself emperor.

Rooms in the castle were a contrast to that in which the king slept. A miserable little room, with a small bed hidden behind a screen; no slippers, no dressing-gown, only an old night-cap, which a *valet de chambre* told us Frederick put on when he had a cold, and on the top of which he wore his hat. It must have been inconvenient for sleeping in. A table stood before a sofa, covered with paper, pens, an inkstand, and some half-burnt copybooks. The same valet told us these books had contained the history of the last war; and some of them having been burnt by accident, the king

had given up the work. He probably began it again later on, for it was published immediately after his death.

About five or six weeks after my interview with Frederick, Lord Keith informed me that his majesty had accorded me an official position; it was that of governor or tutor to the corps of Pomeranian Cadets, which he had just formed. The number of the cadets was limited to fifteen, and there were to be five tutors; thus each one would have three pupils. The pay was six hundred crowns, and food at the cadets' table. The duties consisted in following the cadets wherever they went, even to Court, when a braided uniform must be worn. I was told I must make up my mind at once; my four confrères were already installed, and his majesty liked things to be settled without delay. I asked Lord Keith where the college was, and promised him an answer for the following day.

I had need of all my self-command to keep from bursting out laughing when this absurd proposition was made me; but my surprise was still greater when I saw the habitation of these fifteen noblemen from wealthy Pomerania. Three or four large halls almost without furniture, and several whitewashed bedrooms, each of which contained a wretched little bed, a deal table, and two chairs in the same wood. The cadets, who were from twelve to thirteen years of age, were dirty and shock-headed, tightly buttoned up in a scanty uniform, which showed up their dull, bucolic physiognomies. As for the other tutors, I took them for servants; they eyed me in an alarmed and aggressive manner, not daring to suppose I could be their expected colleague.

I hastened to Lord Keith's, anxious to tell him of the brilliant offer that had been made me through his interposition. The good old man said I was right to refuse such an occupation, but that I ought, all the same, to thank the king before leaving Berlin. I told him that I did not much care about presenting myself again to the king, so he promised to make my apologies for me.

I decided to go to Russia, and I began to make prepara-

tions for the voyage. Baron von Treidel offered me an introduction to his sister, the Duchess of Courland, and I wrote to M. de Bragadin for letters to a banker in Petersburg, who would pay me monthly the sum necessary for my maintenance. Chance sent me a servant, a man named Lambert, from Lorraine, who gave himself out as a deserter from his regiment, on account of a quarrel he had had with his superior officer. I found out afterwards that this was a trumped-up story; but at the time he interested me.

I decided after all to take Lord Keith's advice, and see the king again before leaving. So I went to Potsdam with the Venetian, Baron Bodisson, who had a picture by Andrea del Sarto, which he wished to sell. Frederick was on parade with his troops when I arrived. He came up to me, and asked familiarly when I thought of going to Petersburg.

'In five or six days, sire, if your majesty permits.'

'Well, good luck to you, but what do you hope to do in that country?'

'What I hoped to have done in this, sire: please the master of it.'

'Have you been recommended to the empress?'

'No, sire. I have only an introduction to a banker.'

'That is better worth having. If you pass through here on your return, come and tell me the news from Russia. Adieu!'

'Adieu, sire.'

I had two hundred ducats when I left Berlin, but I had foolishly gambled away a hundred at Dantzig; when we reached Mitau, I had only three ducats left; nevertheless, I went to the best inn. The next morning I called on Herr von Kaiserling, who undertook to present my letter to the Duchess of Courland. He left me with his wife, who ordered chocolate to be served me; it was brought by a pretty young Polish maid-servant. She stood in front of me with downcast eyes while I drank it, and her appearance and manners charmed me, so that I slipped my three ducats under the saucer when I replaced it on the tray. It was a

most foolish piece of ostentation, but as my readers know by this time, I never could resist the caprice of the moment.

Von Kaiserling brought me an invitation from the duchess to supper and a ball, which she was giving that night. I accepted the supper, but refused the ball, saying as an excuse that I had no suitable dress, my best suits being summer ones. Half an hour after, the duchess sent word that I could go in a domino, 'which,' said Kaiserling, 'you can easily hire from a Jew.' He added that masks were not originally intended to be worn, but that the duchess had sent word to her guests that they must wear them, so as to enable a foreigner who had just arrived without his baggage to be present.

I was much embarrassed, but my usual good fortune came to my assistance. A Jew presented himself at my inn, and asked me if I had any gold Fredericks with me, as he would change them for me without my paying discount.

'I have no need of your services,' I said, 'my money is all in ducats.'

'I know, sir, and you part with them very easily.'

Not understanding his allusion, I stared at him. He went on to say that he would give me ten hundred ducats if I would be so good as to change them into roubles for him at Petersburg. I was much surprised at the credulity of this man, and told him, in an affectedly indifferent tone, that I would take a hundred from him, for which I gave him a receipt and a note drawn on Demetrio Papane Lopolo, the banker. He went off, promising to send me a magnificent domino for the ball. When Lambert came in, he told me the landlord was telling every one that I was throwing money out of the windows. The Jew had told him I had given a chambermaid three ducats for bringing me a cup of chocolate. This, then, was the key to the enigma!

I went to Court at the appointed hour, and von Kaiserling presented me to the duchess, who presented me to the duke, the celebrated Biron, or Birlen, once the favourite of the Empress Anne Ivanovna, and Regent of Russia on the

death of that sovereign, and afterwards condemned to twenty years in Siberia. He was over six feet high, and was still a very handsome man.

The ball opened with a *polonaise*, which I danced with the duchess, after which I danced a *contredanse* with Mlle. de Manteuffel, one of the prettiest of the maids-of-honour. I sat next to the duchess at supper, and was, in fact, the only cavalier for eleven ladies. They were all respectable dowagers, and had long left their charms behind them. The duchess was most attentive to me, and after supper I was given a glass of what I took to be tokay, and which I afterwards found to be nothing but very old English ale.

The next day but one I dined with the duke. There were no ladies present, and the conversation turned on mines and minerals, and though I knew nothing whatever of these subjects, I was fool enough to talk as though I had studied them all my life. An old chamberlain, who had the direction of all the mines in the duchy, saw fit to contradict some of my statements, but the duke took my part. After dinner he asked me, if I was not in a great hurry to get to Petersburg, to spare him a fortnight, as he would like me to visit his mining establishments and write down my observations on them. I consented, and it was arranged that I was to set off on my tour of inspection next day, and that the old chamberlain was to fetch me a carriage and six horses. Our tour lasted fifteen days. We changed horses every three or four hours, and we refreshed ourselves copiously from a store of fine wines which the chamberlain took along with him. We went over five copper and iron works. It was not necessary to know much. Here I recommended some slight reforms; there I recommended an increase of workmen. Knowing that it was economy the duke had in view, I devoted myself to reducing the expenses wherever it seemed possible, notably in one mine where thirty labourers were employed; I suggested the construction of a short canal, which could be fed by a little river, and which, by means of a simple lock, could be made to turn three wheels,

and so suppress twenty hands. The duke was delighted with my observations and suggestions. He told me he would send me to Riga in one of his own carriages, and would give me a letter to his son, Prince Charles; finally, he told me to tell him frankly whether I would prefer a piece of jewellery, or its equivalent in money.

'Prince,' said I, 'I can accept money from a man such as your royal highness. It will be of far more use to me than jewellery.'

He gave me an order on his privy purse for four hundred Albertsthalers, which were immediately paid over to me. An Albertshaler was worth half a ducat. The next day, a young chamberlain brought me the letter for Prince Charles, wished me good speed, and told me the carriage was at the door. I went off well pleased with myself, and with my man-servant Lambert, who had done me good service. We arrived at Riga about noon, and I at once sent the letter to Prince Charles.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GREAT CATHERINE

Prince Charles de Biron was the youngest son of the reigning Duke of Courland. He was a major-general in the Russian service, and Knight of the Order of Saint Alexander-Newski. He was then thirty-six years old, of agreeable appearance, but not handsome. He spoke French well, and told me that his table, his society, his pleasures, his horses, his advice, and his purse were at my disposal for as long as I was in Riga. 'I don't offer to lodge you,' he said, 'because I am very much cramped for room, but I shall see that you have a comfortable apartment.'

I dined quietly with the prince and his mistress. She was pretty, but pale, sad, and dreamy, somewhere about twenty years of age. She ate hardly anything, and when the prince urged her to take food or wine, she refused disdainfully. The prince teased her, but not unkindly. I heard afterwards from a dancer named Campioni, and a friend of mine, whom I met at the prince's table, that the prince was head over ears in debt, and spent a great deal on his mistress, who made him very unhappy with her bad temper.

'Why is she so unamiable?'

'He has not kept his word to her, she says. He promised to find her a husband at the end of two years; the time has elapsed. Two young lieutenants have proposed to her, but she will not take anything below a major.'

The empress came to Riga while I was there; and I was witness of the affability and gracious gentleness with which she received the homage of the Livonian nobility, and the manner in which she kissed on the mouth all the young ladies who were presented to her. She was surrounded by

the Orloffs, and some of the other nobles who had taken part in the conspiracy. To please these faithful servants, she played faro with them, and held a bank of ten thousand roubles against them. The bank was broken at the first deal. The next day she went on to Mitau, where they erected triumphal arches of wood, stone being scarce in that country.

The very day after her arrival, the news that a revolution had broken out in Petersburg caused great consternation. They wanted to drag Ivan Ivanovitz out of the citadel where he was detained, and proclaim him emperor. As a matter of fact the unhappy prince had already been proclaimed emperor, when a baby in the cradle, and it was Elizabeth Petrovna who had dethroned him. Two of the officers to whose keeping he was confided, seeing that they were powerless to prevent his being released, slew him. Poor innocent victim!

The affair made such a sensation that the prudent Panin sent courier after courier to beg the empress to come back. She hastened back to her capital; but by the time she reached it all was quiet. She rewarded the murderers of the unfortunate Ivan, and cut off the head of the audacious man who had sought to dethrone her. It was reported that she was in connivance with the assassins, but this I believe to be a calumny. She was strong-minded, but not perfidious or cruel. When I saw her at Riga she was thirty-five years old, and had reigned on the throne two years. Without being beautiful, she was pleasing, with gentle, easy manners, and an air of calm tranquillity which never left her.

I left Riga on the 15th of December, when the thermometer registered fifteen degrees of frost. I did not suffer from the cold, although I travelled day and night, for I never left my carriage. I had paid in advance all the relays from Riga to Petersburg; and Marshal Braun, the governor of Livonia, had given me a passport. I had a French manservant on the box, who had offered me his services for no other wages than his travelling expenses. He bore the awful

cold of those two days and three nights without appearing to suffer in the least. Only a Frenchman would put up with such hardships. A Russian dressed as lightly as my servant was would have been frozen to death in twenty-four hours, notwithstanding the amount of corn brandy he would have swallowed. I lost sight of this man on arriving at Petersburg, but met him three months after, when he was my fellow-guest at a dinner given by M. de Czernitscheff. He wore a rich uniform covered with gold braid; and I learned he was acting as tutor to a young count who sat beside him.

As for my valet, he stayed in the carriage with me, and did nothing but eat, drink, and sleep, without so much as saying a word. I arrived in Petersburg as the first rays of the rising sun were gilding the horizon; we were then in the winter solstice, and as the sun was rising at exactly twenty-four minutes past nine, I can certify that the longest night in that part of Russia is eighteen hours and three-quarters.

I took lodgings in a wide, handsome street called the Milliona. I had two fine rooms at a low rent; they were furnished with two beds, four chairs, and two small tables. On seeing the enormous stoves, I thought it would take a great deal of wood to heat them, but this was a mistake. Russia is the only country where they know how to make stoves, as Venice is the only place where they know how to make cisterns. The fireplaces are only filled up once in twenty-four hours, for there is a trap which is carefully shut as soon as the wood is reduced to charcoal. It is only in the houses of very rich people that the stoves are charged twice a day, because it is strictly forbidden for the servants to close the trap; and for this reason: the master may come back from hunting tired, or drunk; he goes to bed, and from inadvertence or carelessness the servant shuts the trap before the wood is all reduced to ashes; the master closes his eyes never to open them again. In the morning the servant is taken to prison, and no matter what he may say in his defence, is hanged.

I found everything very cheap in Petersburg (I am told that this is no longer the case, and that prices are as high as in London). I bought some more furniture; a chest of drawers, a writing-desk, and other articles not then in general use in Russia, and installed myself comfortably.

The language there spoken, except among the lower orders, was German, which I spoke as badly then as I do to-day. I explain myself with difficulty, which makes my listeners laugh; but it seems it is the custom of the country to laugh at foreigners.

One evening my landlord presented me with a ticket for a masked ball, given at the Court, for five thousand people. The ball would last *sixty hours* he informed me. I went to it in a sedan-chair, wearing a domino I had bought at Mitau. I found a great crowd of people dancing in different rooms, a band for each. The enormous buffets were laden with eatables and drinkables, and every one ate and drank freely. Gaiety and licence were apparent on every face. Thousands of wax candles lighted up the scene, which I must own I thought admirable.

All at once some one said, 'Here comes the Czarina,' and we caught sight of the tall figure of Gregory Orloff following a masked figure, draped in a domino, which might have been worth five copecks, not more.

The masked figure moved in and out of the crowd, getting bumped by people who really did not know her. Sometimes she sat down by people who were very likely talking about her. She probably heard many remarks which were not intended for her ears, and which may have wounded her pride, but the experience must have been extremely useful to her.

I had an introduction to Peter Ivanovitch Melissino, Colonel of Artillery. He invited me to sup at his house every night while I remained in Petersburg. His establishment was managed on the French system—no tiresome ceremony prevailed. His elder brother was married to a Princess Dolgorouki. We generally played at faro, and the

society was composed of reliable people, who would not go about complaining of their losses and vaunting their gains, so there was no fear of the government stepping in to hinder our amusements.

Talking one night with Baron Lefort, the son of Peter the Great's celebrated admiral, I mentioned a certain nobleman, and praised the indifference with which he bore his losses at cards. The baron laughed, and said that the prince's disinterestedness was not difficult to assume, as he played on credit, and never paid.

'But his honour is at stake!'

'Russians have a code of honour of their own, and it is not affected by leaving their gambling debts unpaid. It is tacitly understood that he who plays on credit pays if he chooses; if he does not choose, his creditor would only make himself ridiculous by claiming the debt. In fact, dishonesty at play has reached a point in Russia impossible to conceive in any other part of Europe. I know several young men belonging to the first families, who boast of having learned how to outwit fortune—in other words, to cheat. One of the Matuschkins defies the cheats of all nations. It is impossible, he says, for them to outwit him. He has just obtained permission to travel for three years, and he declares he will come back laden with spoils.'

I had a letter to Princess Daschkoff, and I took it to the country house, three versts from Petersburg, where she lived in exile. She had helped the empress to mount the throne, which she hoped to share with her. This was her crime. The great Catherine, unable to indulge her favourite's ambition, thought proper to mortify it.

The princess wore black for her husband. She received me kindly, and promised to speak to M. Panin about me. Three days later she wrote that I might present myself to him whenever I chose. This little incident showed me that Catherine was truly great; she had disgraced the princess, but she allowed her favourite minister to pay her court every evening. Well-informed people have told me

that Panin was the father of Princess Daschkoff, not her lover. The princess is now the president of the Academy of Science, the members of which, no doubt, recognise in her another Minerva, or they would blush to have a woman at their head.

On the Feast of the Epiphany, I assisted at an extraordinary function, the blessing of the Neva, which was then covered with five feet of ice. After the blessing of the water, children are baptized in it by immersion. On that occasion the priest let one of the children slip.

'*Drugoi*,' was all he said, which, being interpreted, means 'Give me another!' But what was my surprise when I saw the mother and father wild with joy. They were convinced that their child had gone straight to heaven!

We were dining at Catherinhoff one day, when, having wandered away from the rest of the party, in company with a young officer, we noticed a peasant girl coming towards us. She was extraordinarily beautiful, slim and graceful as a doe. When saw saw us she ran into a little cottage. We followed, and entering the hut saw her father and mother, and several children; she herself was hiding in a corner, like a rabbit which has fled from the dogs. My companion Zinovieff (who by the bye was afterwards ambassador to Madrid) spoke to the father in Russian. I could not understand what they said, but found they were speaking about the girl, for her father called her out of her corner, and she came and stood before us, obedient and submissive, her eyes modestly downcast. When he left, Zinovieff told me he had asked the father if he would give him the girl for a servant, and he had replied that he asked nothing better, but he wanted a hundred roubles for her.

'So you see,' said Zinovieff, 'that there is nothing to be done.'

'But if I am disposed to pay the hundred roubles!'

'Then she would be your servant, and you could do what you like with her, except kill her.'

'And suppose she objected?'

'Not likely, but if she did you could beat her.'

'And suppose, on the contrary, that she liked me, could I continue to keep her?'

'You would be her master, I tell you, and could have her arrested if she ran away, unless she repaid the hundred roubles.'

'And what must I pay her?'

'Nothing. You must feed her and let her go to the baths on Saturday, so as to be able to attend church on Sunday.'

'And when I leave Petersburg, could I take her with me?'

'Not unless you have obtained permission to do so, for although she would be your slave she would be first of all the slave of the empress.'

'Good. Will you arrange the matter for me? I will give the hundred roubles, and I promise you I shall not treat her as a slave, but as I do not wish the others to know of the bargain, will you return here with me to-morrow?'

'With pleasure.'

The following day we presented ourselves at the hut, and Zinovieff told the parents bluntly what he had come for. The father thanked Saint Nicholas for this stroke of fortune, and the girl meekly acquiesced. My servant and the coachman were called in as witnesses, and the girl, whom I rechristened Zaira, went back to the city with us. She was dressed in coarse cloth, and had not so much as a chemise of her own. I dressed Zaira in French fashion, tastefully but not luxuriously. It was tiresome my not being able to speak Russian to her, but in three months she picked up enough Italian to understand all I said to her, and to say all she wanted to me. She soon learned to love me, but she was very jealous. I remember one night I had been out to dinner, and got home very late. As I was crossing my room, I just missed a heavy bottle which Zaira flung at my head, and which would certainly have killed me had it struck me. After this exploit she threw herself on the ground, screaming and striking the floor with her forehead. I held her down, and let her call me traitor, murderer, and all the

other pretty names she could lay tongue to. She had, she said, discovered my infidelity by the cards. I threw them in the fire, sternly assuring her that she had forfeited my affection, and that she should go home to her family next day. She flung herself at my feet, imploring forgiveness, swearing she would never consult the cards again. I forgave her, and we left for Moscow together, where I went to a good inn, and took two rooms and a stable, for my carriage and four horses. I had five or six letters of introduction, which I delivered in person.

All the people to whom I had introductions called on me and invited me to dinner, including Zaira in the invitations. No one thought of asking whether she was my daughter, my mistress, or my servant; in this respect, as in many others, the Russians are extremely well-bred. Those who have not seen Moscow have not seen Russia, for Petersburg is not Russia, properly speaking. The citizens of Moscow pity those who expatriate themselves from ambition, and for them expatriation means living out of Moscow, which they consider their veritable country; they look on Petersburg with an envious and suspicious eye, as the cause of their ruin. The women of Moscow are better looking than those of Petersburg. The air of Moscow is much more healthy. As for the food, it is coarse, but abundant. A Russian's table is always open to his friends and acquaintances, and a man can without warning take five or six people to dine at a friend's house, even after the dinner hour. You never hear a Russian say, 'We have finished dinner, you are too late.' They are not mean. It is the business of the cook to serve up another dinner.

I intended to leave Petersburg at the beginning of the autumn, but Panin, Alsuvieff, and several others told me I ought not to go without having spoken to the empress. I quite agreed with them, but as I had not been able to find any one to present me, I had given up the idea. At last Panin told me to go to the summer gardens early in the morning, where her majesty often walked; if she met me it

was more than probable she would speak to me, he said. One day I was strolling about looking at the statues which bordered the walks; they were in bad taste, and so vilely executed as to be grotesque. Names were engraved on the pedestals. One weeping figure was supposed to represent Democritus; another with a wide, grinning mouth, Heraclius; an old man with a long beard was labelled Sappho; and an old woman with a dilapidated bust bore the name of Avicenna.

As I was smiling at these nonsensical appellations, I saw the czarina approaching, preceded by Gregory Orloff, and followed by two ladies; Count Panin was walking at her side. I drew back to let her pass, but when she got up to me she asked me laughingly if the beauty of the statues interested me. I replied that I supposed they had been put there to impose on the ignorant, and to cause the wise to smile.

'All I know,' answered the empress, 'is that my good aunt who bought them was taken in, but she did not let small deceptions of that kind trouble her. I hope that everything else which you have seen here is not as laughable as the statues.'

I assured her that that which was comic was as nothing compared to that which commanded admiration. She invited me to walk by her side, and for more than an hour I talked to this great sovereign of my impressions of Petersburg. The conversation turning on Frederick of Prussia, I spoke warmly in his praise, but at the same time I mentioned his insupportable habit of never giving a person time to answer his questions. Smiling in the most gracious manner at this appreciation, Catherine asked me to describe my interview with Frederick. After which she was good enough to say that she had never seen me at the *Courtag*, an instrumental and vocal concert which she gave at her palace every Sunday after dinner, and to which every one had access. She walked about the concert-room speaking to those whom she wanted to honour. I told her that, unfortunately, I was not fond of music. She answered that she knew some one else who

did not care for it either. She then turned from me to talk to Bezkoi, who had just come up, and I left the gardens enchanted with the honour she had done me.

She was of middle height, well made, and of a majestic carriage. She knew how to make herself agreeable to those whom she cared to interest. She was not beautiful, but pleasing, gentle, affable, and witty, devoid of all pretension, which was the more remarkable as she had every reason to have a good opinion of herself.

Some days afterwards, Panin told me she had twice asked him about me, a sign that I had pleased her. He advised me to try and meet her again, as she would be certain to call me to her, and that if I cared to accept office in Russia she would no doubt find me a place somewhere. Although I did not know myself what employment she could offer me which would induce me to stay in a country that, when all was said and done, I did not like, I was pleased to think that I could gain admittance to the Court. I walked daily in the summer gardens, and was rewarded by a second interview. This time she sent an officer to fetch me. We spoke of a fête which was to have been held out of doors, and which the bad weather had prevented. She asked me if in Venice we often had such entertainments. I answered that so far as climate was concerned my country was certainly happier than Russia, for with us fine days were the rule, whereas in Russia they were the exception.

At this interview, and at a third which took place some ten days later, we discussed the reformation of the Russian calendar, and she surprised me by the intelligence and depth of her arguments. She spoke modestly and simply, but with great precision, and her reasoning was as imperturbable as her good humour. Her manner, the very opposite of that of the King of Prussia, denoted a genius far superior to his. The kindness and gentleness of her demeanour gave her an advantage over her opponents, while the affected roughness and brusqueness of Frederick caused him to be frequently duped.

One day when I was in the gardens it began to rain, and the empress sent a servant to tell me to join her in the hall of the palace. We spoke again of the calendar, and she asked me if it was true that in Venice we did not divide the twenty-four hours of the day.

'It must be very inconvenient,' she said; 'and to the rest of the world it seems rather ridiculous.' She then spoke of the manners and customs of the Venetians, and of their fondness for games of chance. She asked me if the lottery had been established at Genoa.

'They tried to persuade me to permit it here,' she said; 'if I had consented, it would only have been on condition that nothing less than a rouble could have been staked; this would have prevented the poor from playing.'

I replied to this wise observation by a profound bow. This was the last interview I had with this celebrated woman, who reigned for thirty-five years without committing a single essential mistake.

I had to leave Petersburg and Zaira, but I left her in kind hands. I set off for Warsaw, where Prince Adam Czartoryski lived, to whom I had an introduction.

I found Prince Adam Czartoryski seated at a large table covered with papers. There were about fifty people in the room, which was his bedroom as well as his library. He told me, in very stilted French, that he thought most highly of the person who recommended me, but that as he was very busy at that moment, he begged me to sup with him *if I had nothing better to do.*

At nine o'clock, 'having nothing better to do'—I found this was a cant phrase in the mouth of Polish gentlemen—I went to sup with Prince Adam. He presented me to all present, and just as we were sitting down to table, a tall, handsome man came in. Prince Adam again mentioned my name, then turning from the newcomer to me, said in a cool tone, 'This is the king.'

I advanced towards the king, and was about to kneel, when his majesty, with the best grace in the world, gave

me his hand to kiss. Prince Adam handed him the minister's letter, which he read standing, then he began to question me about the czarina and the principal personages of her Court. The king seated me at his right hand and continued to talk to me all supper-time. On leaving, he told me he would always be pleased to see me at his Court, and Prince Adam said that he would present me to his father the following morning. I went back to my inn, and next day, at eleven o'clock, made the acquaintance of that rarest of men, the magnificent Prince Palatine of Russia. He was in his dressing-gown, surrounded by gentlemen wearing the national dress, high boots, moustaches, and the head bare and shaven. The prince spoke with affability. He did not intimidate me, but he did not inspire me with confidence. When he heard that I had done nothing in Russia but amuse myself and frequent the Court he concluded I had come to Poland to do so likewise, and he promised to introduce me to every one. He added that he lived alone, but would be glad to see me at his table, morning or evening. He then withdrew behind a screen, from which he emerged, dressed in the uniform of his regiment, and a blond wig with a pigtail. After a low bow to the company, he withdrew to his wife's apartments. She was the last of the noble family of d'Enoff, and had brought her husband an immense fortune. He was a Knight of the Order of Malta when he married her, and won her hand in a duel fought with pistols on horseback. The lady had given her word to marry the victor, and he was fortunate enough to kill his rival.

I led a very quiet life, and I often think of it with pleasure; yet in spite of my economy, in three months' time I was heavily in debt, my carriage, servant, and the obligation to be always well dressed, cost more than I could afford. To add to my woes, I received a letter from Venice announcing the death of M. de Bragadin. For twenty-two years this man had been to me as a father. He had lived economically —he had even run into debt, in order that I should want

for nothing. His two faithful friends, who were mine as well, were poor, and could only send me their sympathy and affection. This terrible news was accompanied by a letter of exchange for a thousand crowns, which the dead man, thinking of me to the end, had secured twenty-four hours before. Everything else went to his creditors.

I remained shut up for three days. Then I decided to go to Madrid by way of Paris. Paris seemed a new world to me; I found poor people become rich, rich poor; new buildings, new streets; I no longer knew my way about. The craze for plays had introduced a new system, new rules, new actors; everything had become dearer. Crowds of miserable people, to distract their minds from their troubles, paced up and down the false ramparts, which went by the sonorous name of boulevards. The luxury of those who drove was only apparent because of the contrast. The two extremes were turn and turn about, beheld and beholders. Paris is perhaps the only city in the world which can change its face completely in five or six years.

When I left Paris, I was alone, without a servant, but otherwise in a tranquil frame of mind. I had a hundred louis in my purse, and a letter of credit for eight thousand francs on Bordeaux. I was going to a country where I had need of circumspection. I had lost all my extraneous resources; death had isolated me; I began to see that I had arrived at what is called *a certain age*, an age at which fortune frowns on one as a rule, and the smiles of women become rare.

I got into my post-chaise at six o'clock in the evening, intending to travel all night, and dine at Orleans. I reached Bourg-la-Reine in half an hour, and then I feel asleep, to wake at Orleans at seven o'clock in the morning.

O my dear, my beautiful France! where in those days things went so well, in spite of the *lettres de cachet*, in spite of the *corvées* and the misery of the people, and the good pleasure of the king and his ministers, dear France, what hast thou become to-day? The people is thy sovereign, the

people, most brutal and most tyrannical of all rulers. Thou hast no longer to submit to the good pleasure of the king, it is true, but thou hast to submit to popular caprice and the republic; a frightful government, which means public ruin, and which is not suited to modern peoples; too rich, too learned, and, above all, too depraved for a government which presupposes abnegation, sobriety, and all the virtues. It cannot last.

I hoped to see Noël, the King of Prussia's cook, at Angoulême, but I only found his father, who treated me very well, and also possessed, I found, a veritable talent for making pâtés. He assured me that he would undertake to send any pâtés I might order all over Europe, to any address I gave him.

'What! to Venice, London, Warsaw, Petersburg!'

'Constantinople, if you like, and to prove that I am not deceiving you, you need not pay for them till you hear they have arrived at their destination.'

I took him at his word, and sent some to my friends in Venice, Warsaw, and Turin, and received thanks and compliments for each.

This man had grown rich by his trade. He told me he sent many to America; and with the exception of those which were shipwrecked, they all arrived in perfect condition. They were made for the most part of turkey, partridge, and hare, stuffed with truffles, but he also made them of *foie gras*, larks, and thrushes.

CHAPTER XXX

SPAIN

I TRAVELLED from Bordeaux to Bayonne and Saint Jean-de-Luz in my chaise; here I sold my carriage and went to Pampeluna, across the Pyrenees on a mule's back, with my baggage on a second mule. These mountains seemed more imposing than the Alps; at any rate, they are more pleasant to look on.

At Pampeluna I hired a guide, named Andrea Capello, and we started for Madrid. The road is as good as any in France. It was made by the famous General de Gages at his own expense, and does him more honour than his blood-stained laurels. Twenty leagues farther on I cannot say the roads were bad, for there simply were not any; up the rugged ascents, down the steep declines, there was no sign of anything on wheels having ever passed that way before. I do not advise travellers who love their ease to take that route to Madrid. There are no inns, only a miserable tavern here and there. Signor or Senhor Andrea carefully chose the best among them, and after having seen to his mules and procured all that was needful for them, he would hunt through the village for something for me to eat. The landlord of the establishment would never think of putting himself out. He would show me a room in which I could sleep and a fireplace in which I could make a fire if I chose, but would not procure me either food or fuel. He would sit nonchalantly smoking his cigarette of Brazilian tobacco rolled up in a bit of paper, and looking like the quill of a pen, puffing out long columns of smoke, as grave as a judge. In no part of Europe do the people live as soberly as the lower-class Spaniards. Two ounces of white bread, or

the roasted cones of the cork-tree, suffice for a Spaniard's daily nourishment. He is proud to be able to say when his guest departs: 'I did not give myself any trouble about him.' This is the result of laziness and pride. 'A Castilian must not abase himself by serving a *gavacho*.' The French, and by extension, all foreigners, are to them *gavachos*—a much more unpleasant name than dog, which the Turks give us, and which term is also bestowed liberally by the English on all who are not born within the three kingdoms. It is, of course, understood that polished and educated people do not speak or think in this way. A well-conducted and well-mannered foreigner is well received all over, in Spain as in England or Turkey.

I noticed that though the chamber doors in each inn where I slept were furnished with bolts on the outside, on the inside there was nothing but a latch. When I asked Andrea the meaning of this: 'Senhor, you must put up with the arrangement, for the holy Inquisition must be free to see at any moment what foreigners are doing in their rooms.'

'But what has your cursed Inquisition——'

'For the love of God, Senhor Jacob, don't talk like that! or we are both lost.'

'Well, then, what has your holy Inquisition got to be curious about?'

'Everything: whether you eat meat on fast days; whether there are two unmarried persons of different sexes in one room. The holy Inquisition, Senhor Don Jaïmo, watches continually for our eternal salvation in this country.'

Whenever we met a priest taking the viaticum to a dying person, Andrea would stop and bid me imperatively to get down and kneel in the mud, and there was nothing to do but to obey. Just then the burning religious question of the day was breeches. An edict had been issued forbidding the wearing of breeches with buttoned fronts; flaps only were allowed. The tailors who made the other model, and the men who wore them were punished. In spite of all, however, the fashion persisted, and priests and monks preached

themselves hoarse. Matters had come to such a pass that revolution almost broke out—a revolution which would hav enriched history with an episode worthy of Tacitus, an which would have made all Europe hold its sides for laugh ing. Fortunately it was settled without bloodshed. A notic was stuck on the doors of the churches, declaring that bu toned breeches would be permitted to the executioner onl This had the desired effect, for no one cared to emula that worthy.

I entered Madrid by the Alcala gate. I was searched, an my books were taken from me, but returned to me thre days after. One of the clerks asked me for a pinch of snuff I handed him my box. He calmly threw the contents int the road, saying: 'Senhor, in Spain this tobacco is accursed It was good Paris *râpé*. But they are rigorous on this hea The king, who only stuffs one enormous pinch into h enormous nose in the morning on rising, insists that othe should keep his factory going. Spanish tobacco is very goo when it is pure, which it rarely is.

A friend at Bordeaux had given me the address of a hotel, where I took comfortable rooms, but I suffered some what from the cold, which is drier and more stinging tha in Paris, in spite of Madrid being forty degrees furth south. One reason is that the city site is the highest i Europe, and is furthermore surrounded by mountains. Th air is bad for foreigners, especially those of a full habi Spaniards, who are generally thin and wizened, never g out without their long black mantle. The poor people wea a regular Arab burnous. The men are narrow-minded an prejudiced, while the women, although ignorant, are ger erally intelligent. Both sexes are animated by desires an passions as lively as the air they breathe, and as burning the sun which shines on them. The men hate foreigner but the women revenge us by loving us, though with th most extreme caution.

I had need of a servant who could speak French, an after much difficulty succeeded in finding one, and at a

exorbitant wage. He was what is called in Madrid a *page*. I was not to ask him to ride behind my carriage, to carry parcels, or to light me at night with a lanthorn or a torch. This page was about thirty years old, and repulsively ugly. I wish to God he had broken his leg on his way to take service with me!

I presented a letter from the Princess Lubomirska to the Count d'Aranda. It was he who purged Spain of the Jesuits, and he was more powerful in Madrid than the king himself. He had proscribed the wide-brimmed hats and long cloaks. He was President of the Council of Castile, and never went out without a bodyguard; needless to say he was the *bête noire* of the whole nation. He was a great statesman, of a profound daring, an inflexible thinker, an epicurean; but with an appearance of strictness he permitted himself everything which he denied to others. This hideous personage, who squinted disagreeably, received me with coldness.

'What have you come to do in Spain?'

'To instruct myself by observing the manners and customs of an esteemed nation, and at the same time to put my poor talents to account, if I can find some employment under the government?'

'You have no need of me; if you live quietly and conform to the laws no one will molest you. As to what you propose to do with your talents, you must address yourself to your ambassador. He will introduce you, and make you known to the people who might employ you.'

'Monseigneur, the Venetian ambassador can do me no harm, but he can do me no good, for I am in disgrace with the State Inquisitors. I am certain he will not even receive me.'

'In that case you must not expect anything from the Court. I advise you to make amusement your object during your stay here.'

The Neapolitan ambassador spoke in the same strain; so did the Marquis de Moras, and the Duke de Lossada. The latter advised me to try by some means to conciliate the

Venetian minister. With this end in view, I wrote to Signo Dandolo, asking him for a letter which would instigate th ambassador to be favourable to me in spite of my quarre with the inquisitors. I furthermore wrote to his excellenc himself, claiming his protection, not as ambassador of th State Inquisitors, but as ambassador of the republic of whic I had never ceased to be a citizen. The following morning my servant announced Count Manucci; and a handsom young fellow, with a charming manner, came in. He tol me that he lived in the ambassador's house, and that hi excellency had sent him to say that though for certai reasons he could not openly receive me, he should be de lighted to see me privately.

Manucci told me he was a Venetian, and knew me b reputation, having heard his father and mother speak of m a hundred times. I was not long in discovering that he wa the son of John Manucci, who had acted as spy to th inquisitors to put me in 'The Leads'; it was he who ha so cunningly taken away my books of magic, those fata books which were probably the cause of my incarceration I said nothing of all this, however, to the young man; bu I asked him if he was called count by the ambassador an his household (his mother was the daughter of Signor Lore dano's footman, and his father was a poor setter of precious stones). He answered yes, because he was a count by virtu of a diploma given him by the Elector Palatine. Seeing tha I was acquainted with his origin and family history, h spoke to me openly. He was Signor de Mocenigo's favourite and led him by the nose. 'I will do everything I can fo you,' he said, and he invited me to take coffee with him i his rooms that evening, saying that the ambassador was cer tain to come in. He did, and spoke most kindly to me.

I often went to the theatre, which was a hundred pace from my hotel, and to the masked balls which the Cour d'Aranda had established in Madrid. In a big box, ju opposite the stage, sat *los padros* of the Inquisition, to watc over the morality of actors and spectators. One evenin

when my eyes were fixed on these venerable and hypocritical faces, the sentinel who was at the door called out *'Dios!'* and immediately men, women, and children in the audience, actors and actresses on the stage, fell on their knees, and remained in this position till the sound of the bell could no longer be heard down the street. It was a priest on his way to administer the Last Sacrament. I felt strongly inclined to laugh, but aware of Spanish prejudices, I restrained myself. The Spaniards put all their religion in exterior observances: a woman, before yielding to her lover, will cover up the picture of Christ or the Virgin, if there is such a thing in the room.

The first time I went to a masked ball, an elderly gentleman who sat next me at supper, and who saw I was a foreigner, asked me what I had done with my feminine companion.

'I have none,' I answered; 'I came alone merely to see this charming establishment where pleasure and decency go hand in hand together.'

'That is all very well, but to really enjoy yourself you must have a companion. I should say, to look at you, that you loved dancing, but unless you come provided with a partner you must not hope to dance, for each woman has her *parego* (cavalier), who allows her to dance with no one but himself.'

'In that case I must be content to sit still, for I know no lady whom I could invite to come with me.'

'But in your quality of stranger you could easily procure a companion. All the women are mad about these balls. You see there are about two hundred dancers here; well, I do not exaggerate when I say there must be four thousand young persons in the city to-night weeping and sighing because they have no one to bring them here. I am sure if you presented yourself to one among them, stating your name and address, she would be allowed to accompany you; there is no father or mother courageous enough to refuse, if you

sent the girl a domino, mask, and gloves, and took her in carriage to and from the ball.'

'And suppose she denies me?'

'You will make your bow and withdraw, and the paren will repent them bitterly, for the daughter will be ill, ar pretend to have convulsions and have to be put to be cursing the paternal tyranny. She will swear she never spol to you before, so that nothing could be more innocent tha your request. I hope you will come and tell me the resu of your efforts,' continued my new friend, who spoke Italia admirably. 'I am here every night when there is a ball, ar you will find me in the box to which I shall now have th pleasure of conducting you. If you will allow me, I wi present you to a lady whom you will also find here on futur occasions.'

I was much touched with his politeness, and told him m name. He took me to a box where I saw two ladies and ar other middle-aged man. The conversation turned on th ball and my opinion of it. One of the ladies, whose feature bore traces of great beauty, asked me in good French wha *tertulias*, *i.e.* what society, I frequented.

'Madame, as I have only been in Madrid a very shor time, and have not yet been presented at Court, I am absc lutely without acquaintance.'

'Oh, how I pity you! Come and see me, you will be mos welcome; my name is Pichona, any one will tell you wher I live.'

About midnight the wildest and maddest of dances began at a given signal from the orchestra. It was the *fandango* which I fondly supposed I had often seen, but which wa far beyond my wildest imaginings. I had seen it on the stag in Italy and France, where the dancers there are carefu not to make the gestures which render this the mos voluptuous of dances. Each couple, man and woman, onl make three steps, then keeping time with their castagnette to the music, they throw themselves into a variety of lasciv ious attitudes; the whole of love, from its birth to its end

from is first sigh to its last ecstasy, is set forth. In my excitement I cried aloud. My new friend told me that to see this dance to perfection, one should see it danced by *gitanos*.

'But,' said I, 'has the Inquisition nothing to say to it?'

La Pichona, interposing, said that it was absolutely forbidden, and no one would dare to dance it if the Count d'Aranda had not given permission. I told my wretched page to get me a teacher for the *fandango*. He brought me a dancer from the theatre, who also gave me Spanish lessons; in three days I learned it so well, that in the opinion of Spaniards themselves I could dance it as well as any of them.

On the feast of St. Anthony, as I was passing the church of the *Soledad*, I went in with the double intention of hearing Mass and finding a partner for the next ball. A tall, good-looking girl was coming out of one of the confessionals; her eyes were cast down and she wore a look of contrition. Her graceful walk, well-formed figure and small foot led me to believe that she would dance the *fandango* like a *gitana*, and I determined she should be my *parega*. I waited till she had accomplished her devotions, and followed her as she went out accompanied by another girl. She went into a small one-storied house. I took down the number and name of the street, and at the end of half an hour went back and rang the bell.

'Who is there?'

'A man of peace,' I answered, according to the custom of the country.

The door opened and I found myself in the presence of a man, a woman, the devout young girl whom I had followed, and another about the same age, but very plain.

With my hat in my hand, and in the best Spanish I could muster, I explained that I had come in by chance to ask if I might have the honour of conducting his daughter, if he had one, to the ball.

'Señor, here is my daughter, but I do not know you, and I do not know if my daughter cares to go to the ball.'

'If you will allow me, father, I should be only too happy to go.'

'Do you know this gentleman?'

'I have never seen him before, and I doubt if he has ever seen me.'

The man then asked my name and address, and promised me an answer by dinner-time. When he appeared it was to tell me that his daughter accepted my invitation, but that her mother would accompany her, and would remain in the carriage.

'She can do as she likes,' I said; 'but I fear she will be cold.'

'She will have a cloak,' he answered.

He then told me he was a cobbler by trade.

'In that case,' said I, 'I will beg you to measure me for a pair of shoes.'

'That I cannot do, as I am an *hidalgo* (nobleman), and in measuring any one I should be obliged to touch their foot, and that would degrade me.'

'Well, will you at least mend my boots?'

'Certainly, and will return them as good as new; but I see there is a great deal to do to them, it will cost you five francs.'

I assured him I thought this exceedingly cheap; he bowed profoundly, and left me.

Next day I sent a mercer with dominoes, masks, and gloves to the gentleman-cobbler's house, but was careful not to show myself till it was time to fetch my partner. I hired a good carriage, to hold four. The bright colour in the girl's cheeks betrayed her pleasurable anticipations. We all three got into the carriage, the mother wrapped in an enormous cloak; but it was not until we were alone that my pretty *parega* told me she was called Doña Ignazia. We danced minuets and country dances until ten o'clock, when we went to supper, talking very little, for I knew hardly any

Spanish, and she was too timid. After supper came the *fandango*, which she danced marvellously, and seemed astonished to be so well seconded by a foreigner. The hour of parting being now come, we went back to the carriage and woke up the mother. When the coach started, I took the daughter's hands, meaning to kiss them. But my hands were seized, and held as in a vice, and in this position Doña Ignazia calmly gave her mother an account of the evening. She held them till we got to the corner of the street, and the mother called out to stop.

La Pichona had kindly asked me to visit her. I had asked about the woman, and learned that she had been an actress, and owed her fortune to the Duke de Medina Cœli. The duke had once paid her a visit on a cold day, and had found her without a fire, as she could not afford one. Ashamed at seeing a woman so poor while he was so rich, the gallant gentleman sent her next day a silver brazier, in which instead of coal he put a hundred thousand *pezzos duros*, in gold, making about three hundred thousand francs. From this time forth La Pichona lived at her ease and received good company. When I went to visit her I found her looking sad. I told her that not having had the happiness of seeing her at the last ball, I feared she might be ill.

'I was not there,' she said, 'for on that day I lost the only friend I had in the world, the Duke de Medina Cœli, who died after three days' illness.'

'Receive the expression of my sincere sympathy, madame. Was the duke very old?'

'No, barely sixty. You saw him; he did not look his age.'

'When did I see him, madame?'

'Was it not he who brought you to my box?'

'What, was that the duke! He did not tell me his name.'

Towards the end of the Carnival, Don Diego, the cobbler, brought me back my boots. His daughter, he said, did nothing but talk of the ball, and how she had enjoyed it.

'She is as good as she is pretty,' said I, 'and if I have not

been to see her, it was because I did not wish to injure her reputation.'

'Her reputation,' said he, 'is above scandal, and so is mine, Senhor Caballero; we should be most happy to see you whenever you care to come.'

I went that same day, and found Ignazia seated on the ground, her rosary in her hand, and her legs crossed like a Moorish woman. She thanked me for the honour I did her in visiting her, and said she had not dared to hope to see me again, as without doubt I had now found some more worthy partner.

'I have not found any one worthy to replace you,' I answered; 'and if you would like to go the ball again, I will take you with the greatest pleasure.'

As the ball was that very night, we sent the mother off to get dominoes and masks. As soon as we were alone I told Ignazia that she could do what she pleased with me, for I adored her, but if she meant to make me me languish I should leave her and seek a more amenable *parega*.

'What can you want of me? I am secretly betrothed to Don Francisco de Ramos, who comes under my windows each night to pay me court. He is to be my husband, and I must do my duty.'

The idea of duty is strong in Spanish women. I made up my mind to try to destroy the idea of duty. 'If your duty,' I said, 'forces you to repulse me in spite of yourself, then your duty is inimical to your happiness; you must cast duty out.'

'Impossible.'

'Yes, shut your eyes.'

But it was no use. She replied sadly that I ought to spare her.

'My adorable Ignazia! I will ask nothing from you, unless you love me.'

'But if I listen to you, how can I convince you that I do so from love and not from a shameful complaisance?'

'My vanity will help you to persuade me.'

During the evening I was tender and full of attention, and took care at supper to see that she was served with the things she liked best. I filled her pockets with sugarplums and my own with two bottles of ratafia, which I gave to her mother. She refused gently to accept a gold piece which I pressed on her, saying if I wished to make her such presents to give them to her lover, who intended to pay me a visit. The young man was not long in appearing; the day after the second ball my page announced him, at eight o'clock in the morning. He told me that Doña Ignazia, to whom he spoke every night from the street while she was at her window, had confided to him that I had taken her to the ball, and that, persuaded as she was that I loved her like a father, he had ventured to present himself to me, and to beg me to lend him a hundred doubloons, which would put him in a position to marry his *fiancée* at the end of Carnival.

'I am,' he said, 'employed at the mint, and hope to be soon promoted. My parents live at Toledo; therefore, when we are married, I shall only see my father and mother-in-law and you, as I have no friends or relations here.'

'I am sorry,' said I, 'but I am very short of money just now. I shall not mention your request to any one, and shall be delighted to see you whenever you can spare time to visit me.'

He left me with a mortified air. My devout Spanish girl wished me to understand that I might hope for everything after her marriage, and she intended to make me pay a hundred doubloons for this privilege; but I did not see things in quite the same light.

In the evening I went to see Don Diego, who regaled me with my excellent ratafia. We spoke of the benefits conferred by the Count d'Aranda, but for whom the innocent pleasure of dancing would have been forbidden.

'The poor bless his name,' said the mother, 'for all the profits go to them.'

'Thus,' said the gentleman-cobbler, 'one performs a meritorious and pious action in going to the ball.'

'I have two cousins,' said Ignazia, 'who are as good as gold. I told them I went to the ball with you, and as they are poor they have no chance of ever going themselves, unless you will make them both happy by taking them the last day of the Carnival. Their mother would allow them to go the more readily because that night the dancing ceases on the stroke of midnight, so as not to encroach on Ash Wednesday.'

'I am quite willing, my dear Ignazia, to give them this innocent pleasure; and it will save your mother the trouble of waiting for us in the carriage.'

The younger of the two cousins was plain, but had some little feminine charm, whereas the elder was most remarkably ugly; she looked like a hideous man in petticoats. The contrast between the girls amused me, for Ignazia was perfectly lovely, and most seductive when she put off her devout airs. On the appointed day, they dined with me, and did full justice to the excellent fare and exquisite La Mancha wine which I had provided. I had ordered everything necessary for their toilette to be placed in my dressing-room, and after dinner I told the eldest one that I had arranged to disguise her as a man; she looked alarmed, and her sister asked if this would not be sinful. 'Do you think I would suggest it to your sister if it were wrong?' I asked in indignant tones, and Doña Ignazia, who knew the legend by heart, corroborated my assertion by saying that the glorious Saint Marina spent her whole life in male attire.

'Come with me,' said I to the ugly girl, 'come, and you will be surprised to see how handsome you look!'

Making a strong effort to overcome her scruples, she followed me into the dressing-room. I made her put on white silk stockings, and some smart shoes. I fastened her garters for her, telling her I should never have imagined she had such beautiful feet. I gave her a lace-trimmed shirt and a pair of my breeches, which fitted her very well

although I was five inches taller than she was. Then putting on her domino and mask, I led her back to the others.

'Now it is for you to come,' I said to the younger one. There was little to change in her costume as she was simply to wear a domino; but I wanted to detain her as long as possible so as to have an excuse for staying some time with Ignazia, whom I had left to the last, so I advised her to change her stockings and her fichu, to rearrange her coiffure, and a hundred other trifles.

At last it was the turn of my pretty Ignazia to be attired. She came with the prettiest mixture of resignation and affection. When we went back to the others, she said naïvely to her cousins, 'I thought I should never be ready, I had to resew nearly the whole of the domino.'

This day being a specially privileged one, Count d'Aranda had given permission for the *fandango* to be danced as often as the people thought fit, but the crowd was so great it was impossible to dance at all. At ten o'clock we had supper, after which we walked about until the first stroke of midnight, when the orchestra stopped instantaneously. This passage from folly to devotion, from dissoluteness to piety, from paganism with its bacchanalia to Christianity with its mysteries, was to me most shocking.

When we had seen the sisters safely home, Doña Ignazia expressed a desire for some coffee; I guessed at once that this was merely an excuse. At the door we found ourselves face to face with Don Francisco, who smilingly asked to be allowed to make a third. There was nothing for it but to accept his presence with the best grace possible; but Doña Ignazia was less amiable than I. She told him with much severity that she would not have asked me for coffee if she had known that he meant to force himself upon us; after which she would not deign to speak or look at him, but talked all the time to me, thanking me again and again for the pleasure I had given her and her cousins.

Two days after, as I was returning home from dining with the painter Mengs, a man of somewhat doubtful ex-

terior came up to me and said if I would follow him to a neighbouring cloister, he would tell me something which would interest me greatly. As soon as we were safe from listeners he informed me that the Alcalde Messa intended to visit me that very night, with his police, 'of which,' he said, 'I am one. He knows that you have arms in your room, and that you have hidden them under a mat behind the chimney; he also knows other things about you, by virtue of which he considers himself authorised to arrest you, and conduct you to the prison where malefactors destined to the galleys are destined. I warn you, because I believe you to be an honourable man; do not despise my warning, put yourself at once in some place of safety.'

I gave the man a doubloon, and going at once to my hotel, I took my weapons under my coat, and repaired to Mengs's rooms; there I knew I should be in safety, as they were in the king's palace. The painter, who was an honest man, but ambitious, proud, and suspicious to a degree, did not refuse me an asylum for the night, but gave me to understand that I must find another one next day. The Alcalde, he said, must have other and stronger motives for arresting me than the mere possession of prohibited arms. While we were discussing thus, my landlord arrived to tell me that the Alcalde and thirty of his men were in my apartment, having broken open the door; they had searched everywhere, but finding nothing, they were now sealing up the trunks they had forced. My page had been taken off to prison, accused of having warned me.

'My page must be a dirty scoundrel,' said I, 'for if the Alcalde accuses him of having warned me, it is a proof that the Alcalde knew that my page knew of his intentions. From this, I deduce that the page is himself the traitor who betrayed me.'

Early the following morning, the great Mengs sent body linen, and everything else necessary for my toilette, to my room. His servant brought me chocolate, and his cook came to ask if I had permission to eat meat. By such means a

prince impresses on his guest that he wishes him to remain in his house, but a private person conveys a hint to the contrary. I declined everything but the chocolate and a pocket-handkerchief.

My carriage was at the door, and I was just thanking Mengs for his hospitality, when an officer came in and asked the painter if the Chevalier Casanova was with him.

'I am Casanova, sir,' I said.

'Then, sir, I beg you to follow me to the guard-house, Buen-Retiro, where you will be a prisoner. This house being royal, I cannot employ force, but I warn you that if you do not come of your own free will, in one hour from now the Chevalier Mengs will receive orders to turn you out, and then you will be taken in a far more disagreeable manner.'

I embraced Mengs, who looked excessively mortified, had my weapons taken down to my carriage, and went off with the captain, who seemed a perfectly honest man.

He conducted me to the palace known as the Buen-Retiro, a strong place which had once belonged to the royal family, and was now used partly as a prison, partly as a barracks. It was in this palace that Philip V used to retire with his queen to prepare for his Easter Communion.

The captain handed me over to the officer commanding for that day, a man worthy to be a gaoler of the galleys. A corporal took me to an immense hall on the ground floor in the interior of the castle, where I found about thirty prisoners, ten of whom were soldiers. The atmosphere was almost insupportable; there were ten or twelve large beds, some few benches, but no other seats, and no tables. I asked one of the soldiers to get me some paper, pen and ink, and I gave him a *duro*, to pay for these things. He took the money and went off laughing.

What astonished me the most was the sight of my page among the prisoners, and of another man named Marazzani, whose acquaintance I had made in Madrid. This latter told me that we should probably be kept where we were for a

fortnight or so, and then be sent under escort to some fortress where we should be made to work, with the hope of being delivered in three or four years. 'That is,' he added, 'if the Venetian ambassador does not claim you.'

Dissimulating my consternation as well as I could, I sat down on one of the beds, to leave it three hours later covered with the hideous vermin which seem endemic to Spain, and the sight of which makes a man sick. At midday Marazzani told me I could send out for some dinner; there was one soldier, he said, whose honesty he would guarantee. 'I have no desire to eat,' I said, 'and I shall not give any money to any one till the crown I gave for paper and ink has been returned to me.'

My page had begged him to ask me for something, as he had not a penny and was starving. 'Not one penny will I give him,' was my reply; 'he is no longer in my service, and I wish to God I had never seen him.'

At four o'clock one of Mengs's servants brought me a delicate dinner, sufficient for four persons. As I would not share with the wretches round me, I made him wait till I had finished and take away what remained. Marazzani remarked in a rude voice that I might at least have kept a bottle of wine. At five o'clock Manucci appeared with an officer. After listening to his condolences, I asked his companion if it was forbidden to write to one's friends; on his answering no, I asked if a soldier would be allowed to keep money given him to buy necessaries.

'Which soldier was it?' was his answer. 'I promise you he shall give you back your money, and be punished into the bargain; furthermore, you shall have pen, ink, paper, a table, and a lamp immediately.'

'And I,' said Manucci, 'promise you that one of the ambassador's servants shall come here at eight o'clock to take the letters you write to their destinations.'

I took three crowns out of my pocket, and holding them up said I would give them to the man who named the faithless soldier; it was Marazzani who got the name out

first. The officer, much amused, wrote it down on his tablets; he was learning to know me, for a man who would spend three crowns to get back one was assuredly not a miser.

When these gentlemen had gone, I sat down to write, but had to exercise the greatest possible patience, for my fellow-prisoners came and read what I wrote over my shoulder. When they did not understand it, they asked for an explanation; or on pretence of snuffing the candle they would put it out. One soldier dared to say that if I would give him a crown he would keep the others quiet. I got the letters written however and sealed, in spite of the infernal tumult; they were not composed with much art, but I had put in all the fire with which I was burning. According to my custom I kept a copy of all my letters.

I spent as frightful a night as any that Dante has depicted. The beds were all full, and even had there been a place I would not have occupied it. I asked in vain for some straw, but had they given it me, I could not have slept on it, as the ground was running with water. There was no provision of any kind made for cleanliness, and my readers may imagine the consequences. I sat up on a bench without a back, resting my head on my hand. At seven o'clock, the good Manucci came again; he *was* good then, and a second Providence for me. He brought me some chocolate, which I drank while I related my horrible experiences. He said that my letter to the ambassador was cruel, and when I showed him the copies of the others, he told me that one obtained more with gentleness than with abuse. He was too young to know that these situations make it impossible for a man to moderate himself. An hour after his departure, Doña Ignazia and her father appeared. This visit hurt my pride, but I had to make the best of it and appear grateful; it was pure kindness on their part. When the honest cobbler was leaving, he embraced me; at the same time slipping a rouleau of money into my hand, he whispered to me that it contained four quadruples, and that I was to repay them

when I could. This was more than a thousand francs! I was thunderstruck, but whispered back that I had fifty quadruples in my pocket, but did not dare show them to him because of the scoundrels who were watching us. He put his rouleau back in his pocket, weeping the while. I promised I would go and see him as soon as I was free. The good man had not given his name, and as he was very well dressed, he was taken for a person of importance. Characters such as his are not uncommon in Spain, where a kind of heroic exaltation is very general.

Mengs sent his servant again at noon, with a more delicate and less abundant dinner than the day before; this was what I wanted.

At one o'clock I was taken before the Alcalde, but refused to answer any of his questions, alleging my imperfect knowledge of Spanish. Finally he told me to write down my name, qualities, and reasons for being in Spain, in Italian; which I did. I passed a second night more frightful than the first, and when Manucci came in the morning he was alarmed at my appearance. While he was there a superior officer came in.

'Monsieur le Chevalier,' he said, 'Count d'Aranda is at the door; he regrets extremely the misfortune which has befallen you; if you had written to him sooner, your detention would have been shorter.'

'It was my intention to write to him, colonel,' I said, 'but a soldier'—and I told him the story of the stolen crown.

The colonel having learned the man's name sent for his captain, and after severely reprimanding him, ordered him to refund the money himself, and to have the soldier bastinadoed in my presence.

I recounted to him in detail the circumstances of my arrest, and what I had endured in the stinking, filthy hole where I had been put. I told him if I did not that day recover my liberty, my arms, and my honour, I should either go mad, or kill myself. He assured me that my arms would

be returned to me, and that I should be able to sleep in my own bed before nightfall. He added that my arrest was due to a mistake; that the Alcalde Messa had been deceived by my infamous page.

'He is here,' I said; 'and I beg you to have him removed elsewhere, for it is quite possible I may kill him in my first fury.'

The colonel ordered two soldiers to take the scoundrel away, and I have never seen or heard of him since. I went down into the guard-room with the officer and Manucci, to witness the punishment of the bastinado inflicted on the wretch who had robbed me. On my return to the filthy prison I found an arm-chair, which had been brought for me, and never did seat seem so comfortable.

After dinner the Alcalde Messa came and ordered the officer of the guard to restore me my sword; after which, walking at my side, and followed by thirty of his men, he conducted me to my hotel, where he removed the seals, and I found all in order.

I need hardly say in what haste I was to make a complete toilette, after which I went to see the gentleman-cobbler.

Ignazia was mad with joy. I invited these worthy people to dine with me next day. After this I went on to see Mengs, who was much surprised at my appearance. He was in full Court costume, and when I asked the reason told me that he was just going to implore Don Emmanuel de Ricla to intercede for me. He gave me a letter which had come for me from Signor Dandolo, and inclosing one for the ambassador. Mengs declared that it only depended on me now to make my fortune in Spain, as all the ministers would be anxious to make me forget the outrage which had been put on me. He sent me home in his carriage, and getting into bed, I slept for twelve hours.

Manucci came early; he told me the ambassador had heard from Venice that he could present me anywhere, as the grievances which the tribunal had against me were not in any way prejudicial to my honour.

'The ambassador will present you at Court next week,' he said, 'and he wishes you to dine with him to-day; he has a large party.'

'I am engaged to dine with Mengs.'

'That does not matter, I will go at once and invite him; even if he refuses you must come, for you can imagine what an effect your presence at the ambassador's table will produce, the day after your release from prison.'

'You are right; go and ask Mengs, and I will accept with pleasure his excellency's invitation.'

CHAPTER XXXI

WELL-DESERVED DISGRACE

Through all the vicissitudes of my life, it would seem as though circumstances had combined to make me somewhat superstitious. Dame Fortune plays with a man who surrenders himself to her caprices as a child plays with an ivory ball on a billiard-table, pushing it hither and thither, and laughing with joy, when by chance he sends it into the pocket; an expert player, who calculates speed, reaction, distance, angles, and a crowd of other things, does what he pleases with the ball; but Fortune is not a learned geometrician, and he who abandons himself to her must stand the hazard of the die. She seems, indeed, to take a malicious pleasure in proving that she is not blind; she has never raised me up except with the intention of casting me down afterwards.

Fifteen days after Easter, the king left Madrid to go to Aranjuez with the Court. Signor de Mocenigo invited me to go as his guest, saying he should easily find an opportunity for presenting me to the king. Of course I accepted, but the day before leaving I was taken with a fever while driving with Mengs in his carriage. I broke his window-glasses to pieces, and alarmed him terribly. I was put to bed, where after four hours' delirium, I began to sweat, so abundantly that I soaked through two mattresses and the paillasse, and watered the floor round my bed. Forty-five hours after, the fever ceased, but I was so weak I had to stay in bed, and did not go to Aranjuez for a week. I was well received and well lodged in the ambassador's house, but a boil which I had felt coming on during the day became as big as an egg. It increased in size until it became

as large as an ordinary melon. Every one who saw it was amazed, and the king's surgeon, a Frenchman, declared he had never met with its like. After this abscess was lanced I was very weak, and while in this state received the following letter from Mengs, in whose house I had been staying at Madrid:—

'Yesterday the priest of my parish posted a list on the church door of those unbelievers who have not fulfilled their Easter duties. Among those names yours figures prominently, and I have had to submit to a reproach from the said priest for harbouring heretics. I did not know what answer to make him, for it is certain you might have remained one day longer in Madrid, and done your duty as a Christian, had it only been out of regard to those to whom you are under obligations. I owe it to the king my master, to my own reputation, and to my future tranquillity, to warn you that my house is no longer open to you. On your return to Madrid you must seek other lodgings, and my servants will take your belongings to any place you may select.—I remain, etc.,

ANTONIO RAFAËL MENGS.'

This brutal and uncalled-for letter made such an impression on me, that had the writer of it been there, he would surely have suffered for it. The bearer of it told me he was waiting for an answer, whereupon I rolled the letter up in a ball and flung it in his face.

'There is my answer,' I said; 'take it to your master.'

Without losing any time I dressed, and went in a sedan-chair to the church at Aranjuez, where a Franciscan friar heard my confession; the next day I went to Communion. My confessor was good enough to give me a certificate stating that in spite of my extreme weakness I had been to confession and Communion like a good Catholic, and was perfectly in accord with the rules of the Church. Armed with this document, I wrote to the priest in Madrid, and

ordered him to instantly efface my name from the list of dishonour.

As for Mengs, I shall have occasion to speak of him again two or three years hence, when I met him in Rome.

I had written to Don Diego requesting him to take a lodging for me in a respectable house, and he had answered that he had found what I required, and had engaged a Biscayenne servant who could cook for me if I wished. I found my new apartment very pretty and sunny. Before going to fetch my things from Mengs, I turned my steps towards Doña Ignazia's house, as I wanted to thank her father for his trouble.

The house was empty. He had removed. I asked Philip, my new man-servant, the cobbler's new address.

'A long way off, sir; I will take you there to-morrow.'

When supper-time came, I found a small table spread with a cleanliness and refinement rarely met with in Spain. After supper, Philip told me that my landlord would like to speak to me. What was my surprise when Don Diego appeared, followed by his charming daughter. He had taken this house on purpose to let part of it to me. The cobbler-gentleman feared, perhaps, that in calling himself *noble* he had made himself ridiculous in my eyes, but knowing that he was so, in the acceptation which he accorded to the word, he wished to convince me also. His action towards me when in prison had already revealed the fine qualities of his soul to me, but this was not enough for him. I had charged him with a commission which any man might have executed, but he wanted to prove to me that he served me as a friend, not as a hireling. After thanking him for his pains, I made him promise that he would dine and sup every day at my table; he did so on condition that I would allow him the right to send his daughter in his stead, whenever he should be too busy to dress himself properly. My readers may imagine that I accorded this with pleasure.

Ignazia asked me to take her and her cousin to the bull-fight on Sunday, and I the more readily agreed as I had

never seen one. We took three places in a box, the only ones by the bye which were to be had in the theatre; the two girls sat in front, and I behind on a bench which was raised about a foot and a half above the first one. There were two ladies sitting by the girls, one of whom was the famous Duchess of Villadonas. She was in such a position that her head was almost between my knees. When she recognised me, she laughingly said that she must thank chance which made us meet, always either in church or in the theatre. She then spoke in French, praising the beauty of my companion, and asking me if she was my mistress. I replied no, that I sighed in vain. She smiled, and said that on certain points she was very incredulous; then turning to Ignazia she began to talk to her. She made several reflections on Love, evidently imagining that her listener was as deeply versed in that art as she was. Finally, without even asking her name, she said that I had made a most charming choice, and that she hoped we would both go and dine with her in the country. I accepted, of course, but was careful not to fix a day. She forced me, however, to promise I would pay her a visit the next day at four o'clock, but she frightened me when she added that she should be alone. She was pretty, but too celebrated; my visit would have given rise to too much talk. Fortunately for me, the bull-fight began, and every one was quiet. So much has been written and said about these performances that I willingly give my opinion of them: that their barbarity must have a bad effect on the moral tone of the nation. The arena is flooded with the blood of the bulls, disembowelled horses, and sometimes with that of the unfortunate *picadores* and *toreros*, who excite the furious animals, and who have nothing to defend themselves with but little red flags.

At supper that evening, Doña Ignazia, who had become very pensive, suddenly asked me if I intended to visit the duchess.

'Certainly,' I said. 'I should be wanting in the most ordi-

nary politeness if I did not, and we will dine with her one day at her country house.'

'You must not expect me to come too.'

'And why not?'

'Because she is mad. She whispered things in my ear which would have offended me deeply, had I not remembered that she thought she was doing me an honour in treating me as an equal.'

After supper we went on to the balcony to wait for Don Diego, and to enjoy a little fresh breeze which had sprung up, after the excessive heat of the day. Seated side by side in the soft twilight, which protected us from all inquisitive glances, I read in Ignazia's eyes that her indifference to me of late had been only assumed. I took her in my arms and kissed her. . . .

If ever these Memoirs, which I am writing principally to palliate the deadly dulness which is killing me in this dull Bohemia,—if ever these Memoirs, I say, see daylight, it will be when my eyes are closed to it, when I shall laugh (as for the matter of that I do now) at the opinion of the world. Nevertheless, as the said world is divided into two parties, one—and by far the greater—composed of ignorant and superficial men, and the other of learned deep thinkers, it is to the latter alone that I address myself, and I trust that they will understand me, and will, at any rate, appreciate the veracity with which I write about my doings and misdoings. Up to now, I have spoken the truth, without pausing to consider whether that truth was favourable or no to my reputation. The story of my life is not a dogmatic recital. If ever I am read, I shall not pervert any one's mind; to do so, at least, is far from being my object; but my experience, my vices, my virtues, my principles, may be of use to some who know, like the bee, to extract honey from all sorts of flowers. After this digression, I will say candidly that none of the things I have confided to these papers have cost me, in the telling, one tithe of what I

now have to confess will cost me, and yet it is nothing but an indiscretion, but an indiscretion so inconceivable that I have never forgiven myself for it, and even now, after so many years and such vicissitudes, it saddens me to think of it.

My evil genius brought to Madrid a certain Baron de Fraiture. He came from Liége, where he was master of the royal hunt. He was a *roué*, a gambler, and a cheat, as are all those who to-day dare to say the contrary. I had known him at Spa. When I had told him I was going to Portugal, he had come with the intention of joining me, and counted on me to introduce him into good society, where he could fill his pockets with his dupes' losses. There was never anything in my conduct which could lead such adventurers to imagine I belonged to their infernal clique, yet they have always persisted in considering me one of them. When he came to see me in Madrid, I gave him a tolerable welcome. It seemed to me that a little politeness shown him, and a few acquaintances presented to him, would not seriously compromise me. He had a companion with him, a big, stout, ignorant and lazy Frenchman, but still a Frenchman, and consequently amiable. He was a cavalry officer, and seemed to be one of those fortunate beings who get an eternal leave of absence.

Four or five days after their arrival, Fraiture told me they had spent all their money, and asked me to lend them some, which I flatly refused to do. He then addressed himself to Manucci, to whom I had been foolish enough to introduce him. Manucci was too sharp to lend him money, but he found some one who consented to do so at high interest; and with this money Fraiture and his companion started playing, and won some considerable sums. I was not in any way mixed up with them, as I was too busy with a colonial scheme. I went daily to see the ministers, and was preparing to make a journey to Sierra-Morena. Manucci was to accompany me, merely for his own pleasure. From this my readers can judge the fortuitous state of my affairs.

Signor de Mocenigo had been replaced, and the new ambassador, Signor de Querini, was even more favourable towards me than his predecessor had been.

But one morning Manucci came to see me. He looked worried, and his manner was strange.

'What is the matter, my friend?' I asked.

'I don't exactly know: Baron de Fraiture has written to me saying if I do not lend him a hundred pistoles to-day, he will blow out his brains, and I am afraid he will do so if I refuse.'

'He said the same thing to me three days ago. I answered him that I would bet two hundred pistoles he would do no such thing. He was very angry, and challenged me to fight him, to which I replied that as he cared nothing for life, he had too big an advantage over me. Answer him in the same strain, or don't answer him at all.'

'No; I can't feel as you do about it. Here—here are a hundred pistoles; give them to him, and try and get a receipt for them.'

I admired his generosity, and undertook the commission. I found the baron very busy. He received the money without expressing any surprise, or showing either pleasure or gratitude. He gave me the receipt, and told me he was leaving for Barcelona next day with his friend. I took the paper to Manucci, and remained to dinner with him and the ambassador. It was for the last time. Three days later, when I presented myself at the house, the porter told me he had orders not to admit me. I was thunderstruck. I wrote to Manucci asking him the reason of this affront, but Philip brought me back my letter unopened. I could not guess what had happened, but determined to have an explanation at no matter what price. As I was about to take my siesta, however, Manucci's servant brought me a letter, in which was enclosed another one. I read the second first. It was from Fraiture; in it he asked Manucci to lend him a hundred pistoles, in return for which he would show him how the man whom he thought his best friend, and the most

devoted to his person and his interests, was in reality his enemy.

Manucci, in his letter, called me traitor and ingrate, and then went on to say that, curious to know the name of this enemy, he had given Fraiture the money and had learned from him that the enemy was none other than myself. I had, it seemed, told Fraiture that the title he bore was false, and that he had no right to the rank he assumed. He mentioned several other details about his private life which Fraiture could only have heard from me, and wound up by advising me to leave Madrid as soon as possible, within a week at latest.

I cannot describe the dejection into which this letter cast me. For the first time in my life I was forced to own myself guilty of monstrous indiscretion, of reasonless babbling, of frightful ingratitude. Miserable, ashamed, and confused, I recognised the enormity of my offence. I felt that I did not deserve forgiveness, and should not even ask it. I could not conceive what had led me to betray a man from whom I had received the greatest kindness, for I had actually been so indiscreet and base as to tell Fraiture all I knew of Manucci's antecedents—his humble origin, the occupation of his parents, and his relations with Mocenigo.

But although I acknowledged his vexation to be just, I could not but think he was wrong in advising me to leave Madrid. He must have known himself that it was not likely I should obey him in this matter; he was not powerful enough for me to receive his order as a command; having had the misfortune to commit one unworthy action, I could not lower myself still further.

After thinking the matter well over, I wrote to the friend whom I had so grievously offended the sincerest of confessions, in the most submissive of terms. I ended my letter by saying, that if he was as generous as I believed him my repentance would satisfy him, but if it did not, I was ready to do anything he asked, except the one thing which would lay me open to a charge of cowardice. 'You are at

perfect liberty to assassinate me if you wish,' I said, 'but I cannot leave Madrid until it suits my convenience to do so.'

I put an ordinary seal on the letter, and made Philip direct it. I then sent it by the royal post, so that Manucci, not knowing who it was from, would be certain to open it.

It remained unanswered.

Three days later I went to pay a visit to Prince de la Catolica. Directly my carriage stopped at the door, the porter came out and told me politely that his excellency had certain reasons for begging me not to present myself at his house again.

At the Abbé Bigliardi's, a lackey, after taking my name, returned to say his master was out. The next day the Marquis de Grimaldi refused me an audience. The Duke of Lossada received me, but warned me that he had been advised not to do so again. Wherever I went it was the same story. Manucci was showing off his power and influence. I wondered if he had forgotten Don Emmanuel de Ricla and the Count de las Moras. No. There remained the Count d'Aranda. He made an appointment with me. I was cold with fear. I found him alone, very calm and quiet. It gave me heart. He told me to sit down.

'What have you done to your minister?' he said.

'My lord, nothing except indirectly, but by a most inconceivable indiscretion, I have injured his friend Manucci, the man with whom he is all-powerful and who is all-powerful here, who has set him on to me!'

'You have acted wrongly, but done is done. Now, I have no power to send you out of the kingdom, since you have infringed none of its laws, and so I told your minister. But I have promised, in your name, that you will hold your tongue about him in speaking to any Venetian subjects of your acquaintance now in Madrid. This, it seems to me, I can fairly ask you to promise to do.'

I promised.

'Then you can stay in Madrid. Mocenigo goes next week!'

I remained five or six weeks longer in Madrid, paying court to no one, but amusing myself with my dear Ignazia, and the one or two people who remained faithful to me. I had given up the idea of going to Portugal, for I no longer received letters from Pauline, and I made up my mind to go to Marseilles, and thence to Constantinople, where I thought I might make my fortune without taking the turban. Had I followed out this plan, I should no doubt have been again disappointed, for I had reached the age when Fortune forsakes a man, though I had no right to complain, for she had bestowed plenty of favours on me, and I had abused them all. My servant, Philip, who was a good fellow, and superior to his station, corresponded with me for over a year after I left. He it was who told me that Ignazia married a rich shoemaker, whose wealth was sufficient to induce Don Diego to overlook his lack of birth.

Stopping at Valencia, en route to Barcelona, my evil genius took me to a bull-fight. There I was struck by the appearance of a woman, who was not merely handsome, but singularly impressive. I asked a gentleman of Alcantara who was sitting beside me who she was.

'She is the famous Nina.'

'Why famous?'

'If you do not know the story, it is too long a one to tell here.'

About two minutes later a well-dressed, though somewhat villainous-looking, man left the side of the imperious beauty, and approaching my neighbour, whispered something in his ear. My neighbour then politely told me that the lady whose name I had asked wished to be informed of mine. Stupidly allowing myself to be flattered by this request, I told the messenger that if the lady would allow me, I would tell her in person after the spectacle.

'I imagine, from your accent, that you are an Italian,' he said.

'Yes, a Venetian.'

'So is the lady.'

When he had returned to his companion, my neighbour becoming less laconic informed me that Nina was a dancer, and belonged to the Count de Ricla, captain-general of the principality of Barcelona. She had been living at Valencia for some weeks, as the bishop would not allow her to remain in Barcelona on account of the scandal; the count, he said, was madly in love with her, and allowed her fifty doubloons a day.

'Which she doesn't spend, I hope,' I said.

'She can't, but she commits a thousand follies every day, for which she has to pay dearly.'

As soon as the bull-fight was over, I accosted the dancer. She received me as she was stepping into her fine carriage, drawn by six mules, and invited me to breakfast with her on the morrow. I replied that nothing would delight me more. She lived in a very large house about a hundred steps from the city gates, surrounded by immense gardens; the furniture was costly, and in good taste. The first thing that struck me was the crowd of servants in brilliant liveries, and the waiting-maids and serving-women, all elegantly dressed, who were coming and going in every direction. I heard an imperious voice scolding loudly in the room to which I was being conducted; the voice belonged to Nina, who was rating a scared-looking individual, who was standing near a table spread with his wares.

'You must excuse my being furious,' said Nina, 'but this Spanish fool wants to persuade me that these are good laces.'

They really were, but as I did not want to contradict her on my first visit, I said I was no judge.

'Madame,' said the merchant, at last becoming impatient, 'if you do not want the lace, leave it; do you want the other materials?'

'Yes; and as for your lace, to show you that it is not from stinginess that I won't take it——' She caught up a pair of scissors and hacked it into bits.

'It is a great pity,' said the man who had brought me her message the evening before. 'People will say you are mad.'

'Hold your tongue, you——' she answered, giving him a sound box on the ear, to which he replied by calling her a well-deserved name. This seemed to amuse her, and, bursting out laughing, she turned to the merchant, telling him to make out his bill. She took it from him, signed it without even looking at it. 'Take it to Don Diego in Valencia. He will pay you at once,' she said.

The chocolate being now served, she sent a maid to find the man she had chastised, and bid him come and join us.

'You must not be surprised,' she said, 'at the way I treat him. He is a wretch of no importance, whom Ricla puts here to spy on me. I beat him as you see on purpose that he should write it all again to his master.'

Everything she said and did was so extraordinary, I was dumb with amazement. I could not believe that such a woman could exist. The miserable spy came back and drank his chocolate without a word. He was a musician from Bologna named Molinari. We spent an hour talking of Spain, Italy, and Portugal. She begged me to return to supper with her, and I did.

It was now the beginning of October, but in Valencia the thermometer marked thirty degrees Réaumur in the shade. I found her walking about in the garden with her *jocrisse*, both of them very lightly clad. She had nothing on but a chemise and a thin petticoat. As soon as she saw me she came forward and invited me to make myself at home too. During supper she told lascivious stories, of which she was invariably the heroine. The supper was exceedingly delicate and profuse, and the wines of the best. She amused herself by making the brute drink until he fell senseless on the floor.

She invited me to return the following evening, adding that we should be alone, as the spy would be ill in bed. When I presented myself at seven o'clock, she met me with assumd melancholy.

'Alas!' she said, 'Molinari is ill.'

'You said he would be. Have you poisoned him?'

'I could; but God forbid that I should.'

'But you have given him something?'

'Nothing but what he likes. Come, don't let us talk any more about him. Let us enjoy ourselves to-night, and to-morrow evening we will begin over again.'

'I fear not, for I leave Valencia to-morrow.'

'Oh no, you don't, and your coachman will raise no objections even if you have engaged him. He is paid as though he had made the journey. Here is his bill receipted.'

All this was said in an affectionately despotic manner which flattered me. I laughingly assured her I was not worth the present she had made me.

'It surprises me,' I said, 'that, living in such a magnificent house, you do not receive more company.'

'People are afraid to come,' she said. 'They fear Ricla, who is jealous, and to whom that sick animal there writes letters telling him all I do and say. I am glad he does so, and am only sorry that up to now I have given him nothing worth writing about.'

'He will write that we have supped together *tête-à-tête*.'

'So much the better. Are you afraid?'

'No; but you ought to tell me if there is reason for my being so.'

'No reason at all. The blame will fall on me.'

'But I should be sorry to be the cause of a break between you and your lover.'

'The more I tease him, the more he adores me, and the making up will cost him dear.'

'Then you do not love him?'

'Yes, but only to ruin him, though he is so rich I shall never succeed.'

The woman was as lovely as sin, and as corrupt as the angel of darkness; venal by nature, and fated to punish terribly whosoever should have the misfortune to love her. I had known others of the same calibre, but her equal never. I got into the habit of supping with her. At night we played cards, and I was generally the winner, which in the

then depleted state of my pocket was a consideration with me. The spy had recovered, and made a third at our parties, but his presence was not the slightest check upon us. Nina would, after lavishing caresses on me, tell him to go and inform Count Ricla. He must have done so, for the poor count wrote to her, asking her to return to Barcelona, and assuring her that the bishop had received orders not to interfere with her. She persuaded me to go to Barcelona, too, telling me that I could see her every night after ten, and that if I was in need of money she would lend me all I wanted. She made me leave Valencia one day before she did, so as to meet her at Tarragona. She went in the morning, and I followed after sunset. I went to the hotel the singular creature had recommended to me, which was kept by a Swiss, who told me confidentially that he had orders to see that I wanted for nothing. We shall see by and by what all this led to!

Although my landlord seemed an honest sort of fellow, Nina's recommendation struck me as imprudent. The captain-general, however broad-minded, was nevertheless a Spaniard, and not likely to admit of trifling. She had herself told me he was passionate, suspicious, and jealous.

'I am surprised,' I said to the landlord, 'that La Nina should have ordered all this, for she has no idea as to my means, and cannot tell what my expenses should be.'

'Everything is paid for, sir.'

'Paid for! but I cannot allow this.'

'You must arrange it with her, then.'

I foresaw that trouble would come of it, but as I have never cared to look on the black side of things, I put aside all disagreeable thoughts, and went out to present my letters of introduction.

Ricla received me, but remained standing all the time, and did not offer me a chair. Although he spoke Italian perfectly, he addressed me all the time in Spanish. He asked me if I intended to remain long in Barcelona, and I replied

that with his permission I intended to remain as long as I pleased.

I was a week at Barcelona before receiving any news of Nina; then came a note asking me to go and see her, but on foot, without a servant, and after ten o'clock at night. I was a fool to go, more especially as I was not in love with her; but as my readers know, prudence was never one of my distinguishing qualities. At the appointed hour I presented myself at her house, alone, and with no weapon but my sword. I found her sister with her; a woman of about thirty-six, who was married to an Italian dancer called Schizza, because he was as flat-nosed as a Kalmuck. The sister never left us, and when I withdrew at midnight, I had not had one moment's conversation alone with Nina. But next day, as I was strolling in the town, an officer of the Walloon guards accosted me. He begged me to forgive the liberty he was taking, as he was a perfect stranger to me, but he wished to speak to me on a matter which, though it in no way concerned him, yet interested him greatly.

'Speak, sir,' I said, 'I shall take anything you may say in good part.'

'Well, sir, you are a foreigner, and you do not understand the manners or the ways of the Spaniards. You do not know what a risk you run in going to visit La Nina every night.'

'What risk can I run? I am sure the count is aware of my visits, and does not object to them.'

'No doubt he is aware of them, but though he may pretend not to object, sooner or later he will punish you. Take my advice, sir, and discontinue your nightly excursions.'

'I thank you sincerely for your goodwill,' I answered, 'but I shall only leave off going when Nina herself asks me to do so, or when the count requests me.'

I did not tell Nina of this episode, and continued to see her every night. Had I been in love with her, my conduct would have been excusable. On the 14th of November, when I entered her room, I observed a strange man engaged

in showing her some miniatures. On looking at him more closely, I recognised an old enemy, the infamous Parsano or Pogomas.

The blood rushed to my head. Taking Nina by the hand, I led her into an adjoining room, and told her she must instantly dismiss the scoundrel, or I would leave her house never to re-enter it.

'He is a painter.'

'I know. I know him; I will tell you everything by and by, but send him away now, or I must go.'

She called her sister, and told her to tell the Genoese to leave at once and never to come back. It was all done in a moment. When the sister returned, she said Parsano's last words were, 'He will be sorry for this.'

The following night I went to Nina's again. The door of the house opened on an arcade, which ran the whole length of the street. It was very dark; I had only gone about twenty-five steps when I was attacked by two men. I stepped back, drew my sword, and called 'murder' loudly, at the same time plunging my blade into the body of the nearest ruffian. I broke out into the street and ran off at the top of my speed, fortunately just missing the bullet which the second assassin fired after me. In my flight I stumbled and fell, losing my hat, but I did not pick it up. I rushed on till I reached my hotel. I was too breathless to speak, and could only fling my bloody sword down before my astonished host. My riding-coat was pierced in two places below my armpit.

'I am going to bed,' I said to the honest Swiss. 'I will leave you my sword and coat. To-morrow, I shall ask you to go with me before a magistrate, for some one has been killed this night, and you must bear witness that it was in self-defence.'

'You would do better to leave the town at once.'

'What! you do not believe my story?'

'I believe every word of it; but go, I guess who struck the blow, and God alone knows what will come of it.'

'No harm will come of it, and if I left as you advise, I should be writing myself down guilty. Take care of my sword; murder has been attempted, let the would-be murderers tremble.'

Before seven in the morning there came a loud knocking at my door. It was my host, accompanied by an officer, who ordered me to give him all my papers and passports, to dress myself quickly and follow him, adding that if I resisted he would employ force.

'I have no intention of resisting,' said I, 'but tell me by whose orders, and by what right you demand my papers?'

'By the governor's orders. Your papers will be returned to you if there is nothing to suspect there.'

I put some linen and clothes into a bag, and handed my papers over, receiving in return a detailed receipt for them. I then left the hotel with the officer, and his men followed us at a respectful distance till we came to the citadel. I was conducted to a room on the first floor, which was clean, though bare; the windows looked on to a little square, and were not barred. Here I was left alone, and remembering what had happened to me at Madrid, I congratulated myself on being so humanely treated. I had not been there ten minutes, when the guard came in bearing my bag and a bed. I flung myself on the latter, and gave myself up to reflection. Ought I to write to Nina? Should I be allowed to do so? In the midst of my ponderings I heard a sound outside, and looking from the window, saw the scoundrel Parsano being taken to prison by a corporal and two soldiers. The wretch looked up, and on seeing me, burst out laughing.

'Ha! ha!' thought I, 'here is the key to the enigma. He has invented some atrocious calumny about me, and to be sure of his upholding it, they are going to put him under lock and key.'

At midday they brought me an excellent dinner, and in return for a gold piece a soldier procured me pen and ink and candles. I gave him part of my meal, and he assured

me he would speak to the comrade who would relieve him, and who would serve me as well as he had done. I passed my time making geometrical calculations. On the morning of the fourth day, the officer who had arrested me appeared, and told me politely that he was the bearer of bad news: he had orders to take me to the dungeon in the tower. It was a kind of round cellar, paved with large stones; there were five or six slits in the thick walls, each about two inches in width. I was told I could order what I wanted for dinner, but that the gaoler would only visit me once a day, and that I could be furnished with a lamp if I wanted one. When they brought me my food, the officer who accompanied them cut up the fowl and stuck his fork into all the dishes so as to be sure they contained no letters or papers. My food and wine were excellent, and there was always enough for six people, so I shared it with my sentinels, who had never in their lives been so well fed. The poor devils would have done anything in the world for me. I was curious to know who saw to my supplies, but there was no means of finding out.

I passed forty-two days in this hole, and it was there that I wrote in pencil, and with no help but my memory, a complete refutation of Amelot de la Houssaye's *History of the Government of Venice.*

On the 28th of December, six weeks after my arrest, the officer on guard came and told me to dress and follow him.

'Where are we going?'

'I am to hand you over to the officer of the captain-general, who is expecting you.'

When we got to the guard-room, he consigned me to the same civil officer who had arrested me; he in his turn conducted me to the palace, where a clerk gave me a trunk containing my papers, which were all intact, and included my three passports; the latter, he assured me, were perfectly genuine.

'I know that, and have always known it,' I answered.

'Probably, but we had strong reasons to believe the con-

trary, and I must now make known to you the order that you are to leave Barcelona in three days, and Catalonia in a week.'

'I shall obey, though the order is an unjust one.'

'You are at liberty to appeal against it at Madrid, if you choose.'

'I shall complain, but in Paris, not in Madrid; I have had enough of Spain. Be so good as to give me the order you have just communicated to me in writing.'

Accompanied by the civilian officer and a servant, I returned to my inn. The good Swiss was delighted to see me, and assured me no one had entered my room since I left it. He gave me my sword, my riding-coat, and, what astonished me most, my hat, which I had lost when flying from my would-be murderers. There were several letters awaiting me at the post, from Paris, Venice, Warsaw, and Madrid, and I do not think that any of them had been tampered with. I mention this as a proof of what an exceptionally orderly government that of Spain is. When I asked my landlord for my bill, he answered that I did not owe him a penny. He had received orders, he said, to furnish me with everything I needed as long as I remained in prison, and, indeed, as long as I remained in Barcelona.

'Who is it that has paid everything for me?'

'You know as well as I do.'

'Have you a note or letter for me?'

'Nothing.'

'What do they say in town of this affair?'

'All sorts of odd things. Some say you shot the gun off yourself, and bloodied your sword, for, strange to say, no wounded man was discovered. The hat was brought to me three days after you were imprisoned. The reason which was publicly alleged for your arrest was that your passports were forged, but every one knew that the real reason was because you passed your nights with La Nina.'

'You know I always returned at midnight.'

'So I told every one. However, you went to see her, that

was enough for a certain gentleman and now, my good sir, promise me you will not go near her again.'

'Have no fear, my good man; my mind is quite made up on that point.'

I spent three days writing letters to all my acquaintances, as I was superstitious enough to wish to leave Spain on the last day of the miserable year I had spent there. I took a servant with me, who occupied the back seat of my carriage. My coachman was from Piedmont, and seemed a decent fellow. On the second day of our journey he asked me if I had reason to believe that we were being followed, 'because,' he said, 'there are three ill-looking scoundrels, whom I noticed yesterday at Barcelona, here now. It seems they slept in the stable with the mules; they have nearly finished their dinner, and will get three-quarters of an hour's start of us. I must say I don't like their looks.'

'What do you advise me to do?'

'Start late, and stop at an inn which I know of, and which is about a league this side of the one they expect you to stop at; if they retrace their steps and join us, there will be no further doubt as to their intentions.'

Acting on his suggestion, we started late, and reached the inn about five. Our three scoundrels were not there, but about eight in the evening, as I was at supper, my servant came in to say that they were in the stable drinking with my coachman. My hair stood on end with fear; but my good Piedmontese was not easily discouraged, he had worked out a little scheme by which we could escape them. We started before daybreak, and dined at the ordinary coaching station. After having given the scoundrels half an hour's start, we followed for a mile or two, then brusquely turning round we galloped back to the inn, and taking a peasant with us as guide, we struck across country. We kept the mules going at such a pace that in seven hours we had done eleven leagues, and at ten that night we arrived at a good inn, in a big village in dear France, where we had nothing to fear. I gave our guide a gold piece, and stretched myself

out delightedly to sleep soundly in a good French bed. Long live France for her good beds and her delicious wine!

I got to Aix, in Provence, in time for the Carnival. I took lodgings at the Three Dolphins. The town was full of people, balls, suppers, and pretty Provençal women helped me to spend the time agreeably until mid-Lent, when, coming back one evening from dining in the country, I caught a violent cold. I went to bed, suffering from a sharp pain in my side, and awoke to find myself seriously ill with pleurisy. An old doctor whom the landlord summoned refused to bleed me; I began to cough, and in two days to spit blood; in a week I was in so desperate a state that a priest was sent for, who heard my confession and administered the Sacraments. But on the tenth day, after sixty hours' unconsciousness, the doctor declared there was hope for me, and then began a long convalescence, which to me was more tiresome than my illness had been. During all this time I had been nursed night and day by an unknown woman. Her solicitude and care never flagged; she slept in my room, and waited on me with the greatest attention; though she was not old, she did not inspire me with any tender feelings. When I was well enough to go out, I recompensed her as well as I could, and thanked her gratefully for all she had done for me. When I asked her who had sent her to me, she said, the doctor; but when some days later I told him what a good nurse he had provided me with, he looked much astonished, and assured me he had never seen her before. The landlord and landlady told the same tale—in fact no one knew anything about this woman, who she was, or where she came from. She disappeared as mysteriously as she came.

While I was at Aix, I thought incessantly of my dear Henriette. I knew her real name, and she had sent me a message through Marcolina to look for her at Aix. I thought I should come across her at some assembly or gathering. I often heard her name mentioned, but never asked questions about her, as I wanted no one to guess that

I knew her. I thought she must be at her country-house, and was only waiting till I had recovered my health to pay her a visit. I left Aix, with a letter to her in my pocket, intending to send it in by the postillion and to wait at the door until she made known her pleasure to me. Her house was a league and a half beyond the Golden Cross; it was eleven in the morning when we arrived. I gave my letter to a man-servant, who said he would be sure to forward it to madame.

'What! is she not here then?'

'No, sir, she is at Aix.'

'How long has she been there?'

'For the last six months.'

'Where does she live?'

'In her own house; she only comes here for about three weeks in the summer.'

'Will you allow me to add a few words to my letter?'

'With pleasure. Come in, sir. I will open madame's room for you, where you will find all you require.'

I followed him in. Imagine my surprise when I found myself face to face with the woman who had nursed me recently.

'You! do you live here?'

'Yes, sir, for the last ten years.'

'And how was it you came to take care of me?'

'Madame sent for me in all haste, and told me to go to your house, and install myself by your bedside, and tend you. She said if you questioned me I was to say it was the doctor sent me.'

'The doctor said he did not know you.'

'I think he was probably acting under madame's orders; but I am not sure. I am surprised you never saw madame while you were at Aix.'

'She cannot see much company, for I went everywhere.'

'She does not receive at home, but she goes everywhere.'

'It is extraordinary that I did not meet her, it cannot be that I did, and failed to recognise her. You say you have

been with her for ten years. Has she changed much? Has she had any illness which has altered her features? Has she grown older?'

'No, she is a little stouter, but she looks like a woman of not more than thirty.'

'I must have been blind; no, it is not possible that I can have met her!'

I could not make up my mind what to do. 'Ought I to return to Aix?' I asked myself. 'She is alone, she receives no one; what prevented her from speaking to me, from giving me some sign? Suppose she will not receive me; but no—she still loves me, she would not have had me so tenderly nursed had she been indifferent to me. She is vexed perhaps at my not recognising her? She must know that I have left Aix; she must guess that I have come here! Shall I go to her? Shall I write?'

It was the latter course which I decided to pursue, and in my letter I told her I would wait at Marseilles for her reply. This is what I received:—

'Nothing, my dear old friend, can be more romantic than the story of our meeting at my country-house six years ago, and now again twenty-two years after our parting at Geneva. We have both of us grown old, 'tis the law of nature. But will you believe that though I still love you, I am glad that you did not recognise me? It is not that I have become ugly, but I have grown stout, and that has entirely changed me. I am a widow, happy, and well enough off to assure you that if you are in want of money you have but to draw on Henriette. Do not come to Aix to see me, for your return would only give rise to gossip, though if you revisit the town some time hence we can meet, but not as old friends. I am glad to think I may have contributed to the prolongation of your days by placing near you a woman on whose fidelity I could rely. If you would like us to write to each other I will do my best to make the correspondence agreeable. I am very curious to know all

that you have done since your escape from "The Leads," and now that you have given me such a proof of your discretion, I promise to tell you my history, the cause of our meeting at Cesena, and my return to my native country. The first is an absolute secret. M. d'Antoine alone knows the facts. I am grateful to you for not having inquired about me; Marcolina no doubt gave you all my messages. Tell me what has become of that charming creature? Adieu.'

I wrote back, relating to her in brief the vicissitudes of my life, and accepting gladly her offer of correspondence. She in her turn told me her story, and wrote me in all about forty letters. If she dies before I do, I shall add these letters to my Memoirs; but to-day she is still living, and, though old, she is happy.

CHAPTER XXXII

A PLEA FOR PARDON

My *Refutation of the History of the Government of Venice* by Amelot de la Houssaye was now complete. My readers will remember that I wrote it during my imprisonment in Spain, from memory, and on my return to France I revised and corrected it, and determined to publish it in Switzerland. As soon as I made known to my friends my intention of so doing, they came generously forward with subscriptions to the expense. The Count de la Pérouse gave me two hundred and fifty francs for fifty copies. I knew that at Lugano there was a good press and no censor, and that the master of the printing-house was a man of letters. I took lodging in the best inn in Lugano, and the day after my arrival went to see Dr. Agnelli, who was at once a printer, a priest, a theologian, and an honest man. I agreed to pay him weekly for the work done, and he reserved himself the right of censorship, but hoped that so far as that was concerned we should be in accord. I gave him the preface and the introduction, which would take a week to print, chose the paper which pleased me, and the form of the book, which was to be large octavo.

I spent a whole month in my room, working assiduously, only going out to Mass on Sundays, or to dine with M. de R——. At the end of this time the first volume was finished and bound; towards the end of October the whole work, complete in three volumes, was finished, and in less than a year I sold the entire edition. My object in writing this book was not so much to make money as to obtain favour in the eyes of the Venetian inquisitors, for after having wandered all over Europe, the desire to revisit my

country was growing so strong in me that I felt I could not live an exile any longer. For the last seventy years the world had accepted and relied on Houssaye's *History*, which was a clever satire, containing much truth and many calumnies. No one had taken the trouble to refute the latter, and, indeed, it would not have been possible for a Venetian living in the republic to do so, for the government allows no one, on principle, to write about it, either in praise or blame. I believe that this work was reserved for me, on account of my exceptional situation. My cause of complaint would put me above all suspicion of partiality, and the evidence with which I could back up my contradictions of his lies and blunders made me hope for a tardy act of justice. Permission to return to my country was surely due to me, after fourteen years' exile, and I thought the inquisitors would gladly seize this opportunity to repair their harshness. I was right, though they made me wait five years for a favour which they might have granted me at once. M. de Bragadin was dead; I had only my two old friends, Dandolo and Barbaro, left: it was, thanks to them, that fifty people in Venice subscribed to my book secretly.

From Lugano I went to Turin, where I intended to spend the winter; the English minister there was a friend of mine, and I had other agreeable acquaintances. We were a little society composed of Epicureans: there was the old Chevalier Raiberti, the Count de la Pérouse, the charming Abbé de Roubieu, the voluptuous Count de Riva, and the already-mentioned Englishman. We all loved literature and good cheer, and gave delightful supper-parties. It was during my stay there that a pretty milliner, the mistress of la Pérouse, being at the point of death, swallowed her lover's portrait instead of the Eucharist. I wrote two sonnets on this incident, and am as pleased with them to-day as I was then.

The Russian squadron was at this time at Leghorn, under the command of Count Orloff. The squadron threatened to bombard Constantinople, and might perhaps have done so

had it been commanded by an Englishman. As I had known Orloff in Petersburg, it occurred to me that I might be useful to him, and make my fortune at the same time. I went to Leghorn full of chimerical ideas; I imagined that Orloff could never pass the Dardanelles without me. At Bologna I saw the humpback Dubois, director of the mint. I had known him twenty-two years before, in the days when I was in love with Henriette. He received me with joy. When I told him my intentions, he said that Orloff must be on the point of starting, as he had had letters to that effect from Leghorn. I answered mysteriously that he would not leave without me, at which the malicious humpback bowed admiringly. He wanted to talk about this expedition with which all Europe was ringing, but my reserved tone compelled him to change the topic of conversation.

During dinner he spoke frequently of my Henriette, and boasted that he had found out all about her, but I was careful not to let him get anything out of me. He complained bitterly of all the sovereigns of Europe, except the King of Prussia, who had made him a baron, although he did not know him, and had never had any dealings directly or indirectly with him. After listening complacently to his jeremiads, I asked him to give me the name of some banker who would advance me fifty sequins; he replied that it was useless to trouble a banker for such a small matter, and that he would lend them me himself. I accepted, and promised I would repay him as soon as possible; unfortunately I have never been able to do so, and I fear I shall die without acquitting myself of this debt, for even should I live to be as old as Methuselah, I grow daily poorer and poorer.

At Pisa, where I stayed a few hours, I saw the pretender to the throne of Great Britain at the public baths. Hurrying on to Leghorn I found Orloff, who had been delayed by contrary winds; and the English consul presented me to him. The Russian admiral declared he would be delighted to have me on board, and told me to have my

luggage embarked at once, as he intended to set sail at the first good wind. When we were alone the English consul asked me in what capacity I was going.

'That is just what I want to know, before I put my things aboard,' I answered.

The following morning I presented myself at Orloff's house, and sent up a note asking him for an interview. I was told he was in bed writing despatches, but would see me soon. After waiting some time, da Loglio, the King of Poland's agent at Venice, came in.

'What are you doing here, my dear Casanova?'

'Waiting to see the admiral.'

'He is very busy'; and so saying, he passed by me into the inner room. This was impertinence, for it implied that Orloff was too busy to see me, but not too busy to see him. A few minutes after the Marchese Marucci appeared; he too went into the admiral's room, and several other gentlemen were admitted. I was getting angry, and my project did not smile on me as much as it had done. After I had waited five hours Orloff appeared, followed by a number of people, he said affably that he would talk things over at table, or after dinner. During dinner I never spoke, and Orloff read his letters the whole time. When the coffee was served, he jumped up suddenly as though he had just recollected something, and drawing me into the embrasure of a window, told me to be sure and send my things on board that day, as he hoped to leave on the morrow.

'Will you allow me to ask you in what capacity I go, and what my occupation will be?'

'I have no occupation to give you, though something may turn up: you will go as my friend.'

'A most estimable qualification, to gain which I would risk my life, but which will not count for anything after the expedition, or during the expedition either, as you are the only person who will show me confidence and esteem. I shall be considered as an idle man, good for nothing in particular, and I may kill some fool who shows me dis-

respect. You must give me some definite function which will allow me to wear your uniform. I know the country you are going to, I speak the language, I am in perfect health, and not lacking in courage. I do not desire your friendship gratis; I would rather have the honour of meriting it.'

'All very well, my dear friend, but I have no occupation to give you.'

'Then, sir, I wish you good luck and a safe voyage; I am off to Rome. I hope you will not repent leaving me behind, but I can tell you that without me you will never pass the Dardanelles.'

'Is that a prophecy?'

'It is the declaration of the oracle.'

'We shall see, my dear Calchas.'

Such was the short dialogue I had with this brave man, who did *not* pass the Dardanelles! Would he have done so if I had been aboard? No one can say. The squadron left next morning, and I went on to Rome.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE UNFINISHED EPISODE

As I had determined to pass six months in Rome I took lodgings opposite the palace of the Spanish Ambassador. My first visit was to my old friend Cardinal de Bernis, who was extremely pleased to see me.

'Your eminence has grown a little stouter,' I said; 'but for the rest I find you fresh-looking and unchanged.'

'You are quite mistaken, my friend, I am altogether changed. To begin with, I am fifty-five years old, whereas when you knew me I was only thirty-six, and I am obliged now to eat nothing but vegetables.'

'Do you do that in order to mortify the flesh and so cheat the devil!'

'I should like people to believe that.'

He was delighted to hear I had a letter to the Venetian ambassador, though I had not yet presented it, and assured me he would speak for me. He congratulated me on my being well provided with money, and determined to live simply and soberly.

The Prince de Santa Croce told me I might pay my respects to his wife any day at eleven, or two in the afternoon. I went at the latter hour and found her in bed, but being a man of no importance I was admitted; in a quarter of an hour I knew all about her. She was young, pretty, gay, curious, always laughing and always talking, asking questions without waiting for a reply. She was a toy made to amuse a man like the cardinal, who had grave affairs to occupy him, and who wanted in his leisure moments to be amused and distracted. He went to see her regularly three times a day, the morning, the afternoon, and the evening,

when he played piquet with her so cleverly as to always lose six sequins, no more and no less. This made her the richest young woman in Rome. Her husband, though somewhat jealous, was too reasonable to quarrel with an arrangement which gave his wife eighteen hundred francs a month, without the slightest cause for reproach or the slightest cause for scandal. Furthermore, the presence of the cardinal was a protection against other gallants, amongst whom was the Constable Colonna, who was over head and ears in love with the princess, and whom the prince once caught *tête-à-tête* with her in her room. He ordered her to leave Rome and follow him to the country; and only the intervention of the cardinal prevented him from carrying out this sinister design.

In less than a month I became the shadow of the three principal personages of this comedy, and was as necessary to them as a billiard-marker is to the players. I did not mix myself in any way with their disputes, and when they were dull I amused them with stories and anecdotes. I became very fond of the princess, but never hoped for any return. I should have wounded the pride of the cardinal, whom age and the purple had sadly changed. I remembered what he had said about loving the princess as a father, by which he meant me to understand that he would take it in bad part if I attempted to be more than the chief among her humble servitors.

One day when I went to the Capitol to assist at a distribution of prizes to the young pupils of painting and drawing I saw Mengs; he was a judge. As I had not forgotten his behaviour to me at Madrid, I pretended not to see him, but he came up to me with his hand extended.

'My dear Casanova,' he said, 'in Rome we may forget everything which happened in Madrid; we are in a free country here, and can speak frankly.'

'I have no objection, so long as we keep off the subject of our disagreement, for on that subject I feel I could not maintain my calm.'

'Had you known Madrid well, you would have understood how careful I had to be not to give rise to talk, and you would not have obliged me to act as I did. I was strongly suspected of being a Protestant, and if I had shown myself indifferent to your behaviour I might have been seriously compromised. Come, let us dine together to-morrow, and we will try and drown our resentment.'

I accepted the invitation as simply as it was given.

One day when I was engaged to dine with the Venetian ambassador, his excellency told me I should meet the Count di Manucci, who had just come from Paris, and who had expressed great delight on hearing I was in Rome.

'I suppose,' said the minister, 'that you know him intimately; will you tell me exactly who this count is, for I am to present him to-morrow to the Holy Father?'

'I met him at Madrid, at Signor Mocenigo's; he is a modest, polite, and good-looking fellow, that is all I know about him.'

'Was he received at the Spanish Court?'

'I believe so, but I cannot say for certain.'

'Well, I don't think so; however, I see you will not tell all you know. However, I shall not run much risk in presenting him to the Pope. He says he is a descendant of Manucci, the famous explorer of the thirteenth century, and of the printers who did so much for literature.'

I was much surprised that a man who had tried to have me assassinated should speak of me as an intimate friend, but when he appeared, and advanced towards me with every mark of affection, I did not show any astonishment. He talked a great deal, and told lies about what I had done in Madrid, evidently with the intention of disarming me, and forcing me to speak highly of him in my turn.

I was perfectly happy; every evening I spent with the Duchess of Fiano, and every afternoon with the Princess of Santa Croce; the rest of the time I amused myself at home with my landlady's daughter, Marguerite, and a young man named Menicuccio, who lodged in the same house, and

for whom I had formed a strong attachment. He was in love, and by continually talking of the object of his affections he inspired me with a desire to make the lady's acquaintance. She was in a convent, where she had been placed at the age of ten, and which she could only leave to marry, and by the permission of the cardinal, who presided over the establishment. Every girl had the right to a dowry of two hundred Roman crowns. Menicuccio's sister was in the same institution, and he went to visit her every Sunday. It was there that he had seen the object of his passion, and the unfortunate fellow had only been able to speak to her five or six times in as many months. The women who directed the institution were not, properly speaking, nuns, as they had taken no vows, and wore no monastic habit, but they were seldom tempted to leave their prison, for once outside they might find themselves reduced to begging their bread. As for the young girls, they could only escape, as I have said, by marrying, or by running away, and both expedients were difficult. It was a great ill-built house, just outside one of the gates of the city. There was a double grating in the parlour, so close that a child's hand could not pass through the bars; this made it extremely difficult to distinguish the features of the persons speaking from either side.

'How,' said I to Menicuccio, 'did you manage to see enough of your sweetheart to fall in love with her?'

'The first time the governess left, by accident, a candle burning, at other times she has come with my sister as her friend, but without a light.'

'And to-day?'

'To-day, she will probably come without a light, as the portress will have informed the superior of your presence.' As a matter of fact, three female forms appeared while we were talking, but it was impossible to see them in the almost total obscurity. Menicuccio's sister had a delightful voice, which made me understand how blind men can fall in love. The governess was young, not quite thirty, and it was to

her I addressed most of my conversation. She told me that when the recluses attained the age of twenty-five they became the governesses of the younger girls, and at thirty-five they could leave if they chose, but most of them preferred to remain.

'Then, you have many old women among you?'

'We are over a hundred, and our number only diminishes by death or marriage, but I have been here twenty years, and have only known four who left to be married, and they never saw their husband till they met him at the altar. Any one who asks the cardinal protector to give him one of us as a wife must be either mad or desperately in need of the two hundred crowns. Nevertheless, the cardinal does not give his permission till he is sure that the suitor can provide for his wife.'

'And how does he make a choice?'

'He mentions the age and the attributes he prefers, and the cardinal leaves it to the superior to decide.'

'I suppose you at least are well-fed and well-housed?'

'Neither the one nor the other. The revenue is only three thousand crowns a year, and that is not sufficient for a hundred persons; those who earn something by their work are the best off.'

'And what sort of people are they who put their children into such a prison?'

'Very poor, or very bigoted people, who fear that their daughters will fall a prey to vice; it is for this reason that we only have pretty girls here.'

'And who is judge?'

'The parents, a priest, a monk, or the cardinal himself. If the girl is not considered good-looking enough, she is rejected without pity, for they say ugly girls are in no danger of being seduced by the world. So you may imagine that, miserable as we are, we curse the fate which made us attractive.'

'Whoever founded this house ought to be in hell.'

'So we hope he is; and I can assure you we don't pray for his deliverance.'

I could not conceive how such a monstrous establishment could be tolerated, for under the existing rules it was almost impossible for the poor creatures to find husbands. As the founder had assigned two hundred crowns to each one, I imagined that he must have counted on two marriages a year, and that some one appropriated these sums to his own profit. I spoke of it to de Bernis in the presence of the princess, who said we must present a petition to the Pope, asking that the inmates of the establishment might receive visitors in the parlour, with the same rules and restrictions as in other convents. The cardinal asked me to draw up the petition, and to take it to the superior that she might get it signed by the community; after which the princess collected a number of signatures, and Cardinal Orsini promised to present it to the Holy Father. After a very brief delay the necessary permission was granted. Pope Ganganelli, who was a most estimable man, did more than this; he ordered that an inquiry should be made in the accounts; that the number of girls should be reduced from a hundred to fifty, and that the amount of the dowries should be doubled; that each girl who reached the age of twenty-five without finding a husband should be dismissed with her dowry; that twelve matrons should be appointed to look after the girls, and twelve servants employed to do the rough work of the house.

All these innovations took six months to accomplish. The first day that visitors were admitted I went with Menicuccio. The object of his affection was a very pretty girl, but his sister was ravishing; she was nearly sixteen, tall, and well formed. I have never seen such a white skin, or such black hair and eyes. Her governess, who was ten or twelve years her senior, was interesting on account of her languid pallor, which seemed to come from an inward and consuming fire. She told me all about the confusion which the new régime had caused.

'The superior is pleased,' she said, 'and all my young companions, but the old ones are horrified, and cry scandal.'

This first visit lasted two hours. I returned home, my mind full of Armellina, Menicuccio's sister, and of Emilia, her melancholy friend, but, above all, of the former. It seemed to me that my passion for her was the strongest I had ever experienced, but I took care to tell her brother that I was a married man, at the same time begging him not to mention the fact. This precaution I considered necessary, in the first place, to protect myself against any foolish impulses of my own, and, in the second, to prevent Armellina from nursing false hopes.

Menicuccio went to see his friend every Sunday and fête-day, but I, madly in love as I was, managed to see his sister every day at nine o'clock. I took my chocolate with her and Emilia, and remained until eleven. On New Year's Day 1771, I sent them each a warm winter's dress, and presented the superior with a quantity of chocolate, sugar, and coffee. Sometimes one, sometimes the other, would come to the grating alone, and for a quarter of an hour or so I could enjoy a *tête-à-tête*. I kissed their pretty little hands, which until that time had never even felt the touch of a man's lips. On one occasion I begged Armellina to kiss me; she blushed, and casting down her eyes, did not even answer me; I complained, but in vain. I used to amuse the princess and de Bernis by telling them about my unhappy love-affair, and one day the cardinal suggested that we should all visit the convent together, so that after having made Armellina's acquaintance, the princess could obtain permission for her to come out occasionally. This was a delightful project. I guessed that in making it the cardinal was gratifying his own curiosity, but I was not alarmed.

The news of our approaching visit threw the whole community into a state of the wildest excitement, for, since its foundation, no one, excepting an occasional priest or doctor, had ever been inside. The Duchess of Fiano insisted on being one of the party, and we all arrived about three one

afternoon. When we had visited the dormitories and refectory, the inmates were summoned to the parlour to be presented to us. The cardinal noticed Armellina at once, and indeed she was the prettiest in that crowd of pretty girls. The princess was charming; she caressed Armellina, and taking Emilia's hand said, 'I know that you are sad, and I guess the reason, but never mind, you are pretty and good, and I will find you a husband who will know how to brighten you up.'

At these words the superior smiled approvingly, but a dozen superannuated old bigots looked grim.

A few days later the princess asked Cardinal Orsini to grant her leave to teach some of the girls occasionally to spend the day, or to go to the theatre with her. The cardinal granted this, on condition that she would always send her carriage for them, with servants wearing her livery. The first time, the princess herself went for them and took them to her palace at the Campo di Fiore, when I was visiting with the cardinal, the prince, and the Duchess of Fiano. Every one spoke kindly to them, petted and encouraged them to speak freely, and say what was passing in their minds. It was all of no avail; finding themselves for the first time in their lives in a splendid apartment, surrounded by brilliant personages, they became dumb with confusion, and dared not open their mouths for fear of saying something silly. We conducted them to the theatre *di Torre di Nona*, where they were playing farces, at which they were obliged to laugh, and after the play we supped at a tavern, where, thanks to the good cheer and wine, they became a little less reserved. Naturally it fell to me to escort them home, and I had counted on this moment; but I had counted without my host, for when I tried to snatch a kiss I was repulsed, and the little hand I sought was snatched away. When I complained, I was told I was behaving badly; when I grew angry I was allowed to rave, and when I threatened not to go near them again, they did not believe me. Not being of

an age or disposition to enjoy these manœuvres, I decided to abandon the enterprise.

Eight days went by without my seeing the charming but ferociously virtuous recluses, and then I received a note from the superior begging me to go and see her. She went straight to the point, and asked me why I had discontinued my visits.

'Because I am in love with Armellina.'

'I pity you; but from my point of view that is not a reason for abandoning her. Do you not see to what slanders you are exposing the poor child; people will say that your love for her was merely a caprice, and that having satisfied it, you deserted her.'

'Very good, madame. Then I will come to breakfast to-morrow, and after that, if you will allow me, I will take the two girls to the opera, and I beg you will tell Armellina that I have only decided to see her again in consideration of what you have said.'

Emilia came down alone when I presented myself the following day, and reproached me for what she called my cruel conduct; she said that no man who really cared for a girl would have behaved as I had done; she also said I was wrong to tell the superior that I loved Armellina. 'The poor child has been miserable ever since she met you.'

'And why, if you please?'

'Because she feels certain that you only want to persuade her to be faithless to her duty.'

'That is precisely why I stayed away. Do you think it cost me nothing? My peace of mind depends on my not seeing her.'

'Then she will be convinced you do not care for her.'

'She must think what she likes. I know that if she cared for me we should get on quite well.'

'We have duties which you do not believe in.'

'Be faithful to them, then, and do not misjudge an honourable man who respects them by keeping away from you.'

When Armellina appeared I thought her looking changed.

'Why are you so pale,' I asked, 'and why do you not smile?'

'You have grieved me terribly.'

'Well, set your mind at ease, but let me try and cure myself as I best may. I will always be your friend, and will come and see you once every week as long as I remain in Rome.'

'Once a week! You used to come every day!'

'I want to see you as little as possible, so that I may grow patient.'

'It seems hard that you cannot love me as I love you.'

'That is to say, without passion.'

'I don't say that; but I can control myself when indulgence is inconsistent with my principles.'

'That is a science which at my age I cannot hope to learn, and which, to be frank, I do not care to learn. Would you mind telling me if your self-control is painful to you?'

'I should be sorry to stifle the emotions you cause in me. I should like you to become Pope. I should like you to be my father. I should like you to be changed into a girl, like myself, so that we could be together every hour of the day.'

These naïve and charming aspirations, so natural and so odd, made me laugh. After the opera we repaired to the tavern for supper. The waiter asked if I should like some oysters, and as I saw my companions were curious to know what oysters were like, I asked the price.

'They are from the Arsenal at Venice,' he said, 'and we cannot give them for less than fifty paoli a hundred.'

I ordered a hundred, and when Armellina heard that they were to cost me five Roman crowns, she wanted me to countermand them, but held her peace when I answered that I considered nothing too good nor too dear for her. After she had swallowed half a dozen, she said to her companion that it must be a sin to eat such delicate morsels.

'Yes, but not because they are so nice, but because each one we put in our mouths costs half a paolo,' said Emilia.

'Half a paolo! and our Holy Father the Pope does not forbid them! If that is not a sin of gluttony I do not know what is. I have eaten them, but I shall certainly accuse myself of gluttony when I go to confession.'

We drank two bottles of champagne at supper, and afterwards I had some rum and lemons brought up, which I made into punch with a third bottle of champagne. The two girls grew very lively, and laughed loudly when they found they could not walk straight across the floor.

At the beginning of Lent a suitor, a merchant of Civita Vecchia, presented himself for Emilia, but he had only four hundred crowns, whereas the convent demanded that he should have six hundred. Seeing, however, that Emilia's happiness depended on her making a good marriage, and as the man was in every other way desirable, I succeeded in procuring the needful money. In eight days everything was arranged for the wedding. The day that she left the convent she went to Civita Vecchia with her husband, and the same week Menicuccio married his sweetheart and established himself comfortably in Rome.

The good superior gave Armellina a new governess, a young girl, only three or four years older than my little friend, and very good looking; she did not interest me much, however. Her name was Scolastica, and she was sought in marriage by a man in a very good position, but who, being the son of her cousin, came within the prohibited degrees. It would not have been difficult to get a dispensation for a small sum of money; but I promised to try and obtain one gratis. Scolastica had never been to the theatre, but Armellina begged me to take them to a ball instead; this was rather more difficult. I asked the two friends if they would mind dressing as men if I procured everything needful for the disguise; they consented gladly. I hired the clothes necessary to transform them into two handsome boys, and had them sent to the tavern. There was a good fire in the room, and I told them that if they wished

to be alone I would go into the next apartment in spite of the cold.

'I am sure,' said Scolastica, 'that I am in your way. It is easy to see that you two love each other. I am not a child, why do you treat me as such?'

'You are right, Scolastica; I love Armellina, but she does not love me, and is always looking out for pretexts to make me unhappy.' So saying, I left the room. A quarter of an hour after Armellina tapped at the door; they could not manage without me, she said. The shoes were too small, and they could not fit them on. I looked very sulky, but she threw her arms round my neck, and smothering me with kisses soon restored my good humour. Scolastica burst out laughing.

'I was sure I was in the way,' she said; 'and if you do not show more confidence in me, I warn you I will not go to the opera with you to-morrow.'

'Well then, kiss my friend,' said Armellina.

This generosity on her part was rather displeasing to me; I had rather she had shown a little jealousy, but I embraced Scolastica cordially, thinking that by doing so I might perhaps punish Armellina, but on the contrary she was delighted. Our new friend was quite as pretty as Armellina, and I was beginning to think I had better perhaps cultivate a liking for her, as she seemed more accessible, when the shoemaker arrived with a fresh provision of shoes. In a few minutes my girls were transformed into two boys.

There was small fear of my being recognised at the ball, as it was given by a society of small trades-people; but luck was against me, for the first person I saw was the Marquis d'Août, with his wife and a friend. I must have turned all colours, but it was too late to go back, for they had seen me, and coming forward complimented me on my companions; the poor creatures, being utterly unused to the ways of the world, stood speechless. But I was still more annoyed when a tall young lady, who had just finished a minuet, came up and invited Armellina to dance. I guessed

this person to be none other than a young Florentine, who had once brought a letter to my box at the theatre, and had markedly shown his admiration for Armellina; in his feminine disguise he was remarkably handsome. Armellina, not wishing to show she was taken in, said she thought she had seen him before.

'You are mistaken,' he answered, 'but I have a brother who is exactly like me, and you must have a sister who is your living portrait, and whom my brother had the happiness to speak to once for a few minutes at the Capronica theatre.'

This repartee made us all laugh. Armellina excused herself from dancing, and we sat down; it was of course my duty to devote myself to the marquise, and not even to notice that the Florentine was talking to my sweetheart.

But I was by nature as jealous as a tiger, and raged inwardly. To my further discomfort Scolastica rose, and going towards a middle-aged man at the other side of the room, began to talk to him; after a few minutes they retired into a corner and remained in earnest conversation. I approached them, when Scolastica, rising and taking me by the hand, said timidly that this was the man she had spoken to me about, and who desired to marry her. I spoke as civilly to him as possible, and he thanked me for the interest I had shown in them both, and I left the two together, for my uneasiness would not permit me to be long away from Armellina. To my surprise, I saw she was dancing a country dance with the obtrusive stranger, and by carefully following his instruction was acquitting herself very passably. The Marquise d'Août, who was evidently much amused at our strangely assorted party, told me in an easy tone, but at the same time with the imperious accent of a grand dame, who admits no denial, that she expected me and my companions to supper.

'I fear I cannot have that honour, madame,' I said, 'and my friends know why.' Then turning to Armellina, I said, laughingly, and as with an affectation of gentleness, 'You

know that you must be home at half-past twelve at the very latest.'

'It is true,' she replied, 'but still you are the master.'

'I am not master enough to break my vow,' said I somewhat sadly, 'though you can force me to do so if you choose.'

The marquise, her husband, the Florentine, even Armellina herself, entreated me to give way, and at last I said if Scolastica consented, I would consent. I went to her, and in the presence of her friend begged her not to oblige me to compromise myself. I had no need to ask her, she said, she was determined to leave the ball at midnight, and not to sup with any one, so after a few minutes we made our farewells and departed.

We arrived at the hotel, without my having said a word to either of them, but Scolastica avenged me by speaking most severely to her companion, and scolded her for having forced me to appear impolite and jealous, or to break my word. The poor girl's cheeks were seamed with tears. I could not bear to see her so unhappy, and forced myself to console her; the supper was excellent. Scolastica did the honours, but Armellina, contrary to her custom, ate little; she listened sadly to her friend's account of how she had met her *fiancé*. Great as my personal vanity was, I could not hide from myself the fact that she was attracted by the Florentine, that she too wanted to be married, and that he was the husband she fancied.

I took them back to their convent, promising I would fetch them next day for the opera, and went to bed, very undecided as to whether I had lost or won in the part I had played. It was only on awakening that I was able to pronounce definitely.

. . . . . .

NOTE.—Here there are two chapters missing in the manuscript. It is the one lapse in the whole of the Memoirs. The episode of Armellina remains unfinished, but the reader's experience will doubtless tell him what transpired. When next we take up the tale,

Casanova is in Florence. One would like to know why he left Rome and the life of pleasure he was leading there. Did he go of his own free will? Did he get into some difficulty which obliged him to fly? Did the Pope bid him go? And what became of Armellina and the young Florentine?

But it was probably the author himself who detached those chapters, to rewrite them, or alter the text. Illness and death possibly carried him off before he had replaced them, for in 1798 Casanova was still correcting and re-writing his Memoirs, which were never finished.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HIS VIEWS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

. . . . . .

WITHOUT going into lengthy explanations, I simply asked the young grand duke to afford me an asylum in his states for as long as I chose, and, to forestall his questions, told him the reasons of my exile from my country.

'As for the means of existence,' I said, 'I beg your royal highness to believe that I have no need of assistance from any one. I have funds, and I hope to devote all my time to study.'

'So long as your conduct is satisfactory,' answered the prince, 'my country's laws will protect you. Nevertheless, I am glad you came to me first. What friends have you in Florence?'

'Ten years ago, your highness, I knew all the most distinguished people here, but as I mean to live quietly, I shall not seek to renew my acquaintance with them.'

After this conversation with the young monarch, I considered myself safe from molestation. My adventure ten years ago in Tuscany seemed forgotten, or almost so, and the new government had nothing in common with the old one. I took two rooms in the house of an honest tradesman, whose wife was ugly, and who had neither daughter nor niece to distract me. There I lived for three weeks, as discreetly and quietly as the rat in the fable.

Then Count Stratico arrived in Florence with his pupil, the Chevalier Morosini, who was about eighteen years old. Stratico had recently broken his leg, and could not go out. He begged me to accompany Morosini, and if necessary

become the companion of his pleasures, otherwise, he might get into bad company, and run serious risks.

This interrupted my studies, and changed the plan of life I had marked out for myself, but as a matter of kindness I was forced to become the comrade of a dissipated youth. Morosini was a libertine, who cared neither for literature, good company, nor sensible men. He liked to ride wildly about the roughest country, not caring if he killed his horses and endangered his own life; he drank deeply, and was never satisfied till he was drunk; he was brutally licentious with women of the lowest class, whom he often ill-used: such were his pleasures and his daily amusements.

In the two months he spent in Florence I saved his life twenty times. I loathed his society, but I thought it my duty not to abandon him. As far as expense was concerned, I did not have to put my hand in my pocket, for he was prodigally liberal, yet this often caused disputes between us, because, as he paid, he would insist on my eating and drinking as much as he, and imitating him in his other debaucheries; on these points, however, I seldom yielded. Another friend of mine was Zanowitch, a handsome young man of graceful and easy bearing, and most infectious gaiety. I recognised in this young man the makings of a successful adventurer, who with due circumspection might go far. He was very much what I was fifteen years before, but the extravagance of his dress and equipage made me fear he would fall into the same errors which had been fatal to me. At Zanowitch's house, again, I met Alois Zen, the son of the captain in command of the fortress of Saint André when I was imprisoned there as a boy. I did not become intimate with either of these men, and only met them at places of public resort, yet it was owing to them that the events I am about to recount happened.

Lord Lincoln, a young man not yet twenty, and, I believe, the only son of the Duke of Newcastle, was in Florence at this time, and madly in love with a Venetian dancer named Lamberti. Every day, after the opera, the English-

man paid her a visit in her box, and people wondered that he was not bold enough to accompany her home. He would have been well received, firstly, because he was an Englishman, which is as much as to say a rich man, and secondly, because he was remarkably handsome.

Zanowitch made a note of the state of the affairs, managed to become intimate with La Lamberti, and then took Lincoln to her house. Lamberti, who, of course, was in the plot, showed herself most gracious to the young lord, who after that supped at her house constantly, and played faro afterwards, with Zanowitch and Zen. The rogues took care that he should win some hundreds of sequins to begin with; the poor boy was a mere apprentice in their hands. He found the hook so nicely baited with love and money, most alluring, and swallowed it eagerly. According to the noble custom of his countrymen, he regularly got so drunk after supper as not to be able to tell his right hand from his left, which made him all the easier prey. By and by the pillage began; they were, in gambling terms, preparing him for the grand cleaning out. Zanowitch won large sums from Lincoln, which Zen lent the young lord, who had promised his tutor never to play on credit. In this way the unfortunate dupe's debt went on increasing, until he owed Zen the enormous sum of twelve thousand guineas. He paid three thousand guineas down, and signed three bills for the same amount, and drawn on his banker in London. It was Lord Lincoln himself who told me all this, when I met him some time afterwards at Bologna.

The day after the famous sitting, every one in Florence was talking about it. Tasso Tassi, the banker, had paid Zanowitch six thousand sequins on my lord's order. Imagine my surprise when three days later an individual came into my room, and after having demanded my name, ordered me, on the grand duke's authority, to leave Florence within three days, and Tuscany in a week!

This was the 28th of December. On the same day three years before I had received orders to leave Barcelona. I

dressed hastily, and went round to the auditor, to know what was the motive of this order, which to me seemed inexplicable. I was not reassured, when I recognised in him the same man who had banished me from Florence eleven years previously, on account of the Russian's forged letter of credit. When I asked him why he had sent word to me to leave the city, he replied coldly, that it was his royal highness's pleasure.

My departure from Florence cured me of a very unfortunate love-affair, which might otherwise have had disastrous results for me. I have spared my readers this story, because I cannot recall it without sorrow; the widow whom I loved, and to whom I was weak enough to declare my passion, only attached me to her chariot the better to humiliate me. She disdained me, and convinced me of her disdain with all the pride of a young and beautiful woman. I had not yet become accustomed to the fact that I was growing old, and that old age, especially when it is poor, cannot touch a young heart. This is a fatal and inevitable experience which every man must make, unless he is wise in time.

I reached Bologna on the last day of the year 1772, and on New Year's day I presented myself to Cardinal Brancaforte, the papal legate, whom I had known in Paris twenty years before, when he was sent by Benedict III. to take the blessed swaddling-clothes to the newly-born Duke of Burgundy. We had been together to the Freemason's lodges (for the members of the Sacred College, though they fulminate against the masons, know that their anathemas only frighten the weak members); we had also assisted at many a supper with pretty sinners, and had been sinners with them. The cardinal was a *bon vivant* and a man of much wit.

'Oh, here you are!' he cried, 'I expected you.'

'How could you expect me, monseigneur! Nothing obliged me to select Bologna as a place of refuge!'

'For two reasons. Firstly, Bologna is better than any other city; and secondly, I flattered myself you would

think of me. But I beg you *not* to talk here about the life we led when we were young.'

Among the people most talked of in Bologna at this time was the Marquis Albergati Capacelli. I wanted to know him, so I wrote to Signor Dandolo for a letter of introduction, and a week after received through my good old friend a letter written by Signor di Zaguri, a Venetian nobleman and intimate friend of Albergati's. The marquis was at his country house, where he usually spent the spring, so I drove out there one day. As no one came in answer to my summons, I went up the stairs and entered a room where a gentleman and a very pretty woman were just sitting down to table. After bowing politely, I asked if I had the honour to address the marquis, and on his replying yes, presented him with the letter; he put it in his pocket without even looking at the address, thanked me for the trouble I had taken, and assured me he would read it.

'It was no trouble,' I said, 'and I beg you will read it now; it is from Signor di Zaguri, from whom I obtained it as I wished to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance.'

He answered laughingly that he never read letters at table, but that he would read it after dinner and be sure to execute his friend's orders. We were both standing throughout this little dialogue; as I considered him most impolite, I left the room without saluting him. Just as I was getting into my carriage, a servant came running up to say his excellency begged I would go back.

I contented myself with handing my card to the servant and drove off.

I wrote the same day to Signor di Zaguri, and told him exactly what had taken place, at the same time begging him to inform the marquis that, as I considered myself offended, I should expect him to accord me the usual satisfaction.

The following day Albergati called on me. I was out, but he gave his card in person to my landlady, with his title

'The General Marquis Albergati,' so I was forced to accept this as apology.

'What right has he to the rank of general?' I asked my friend Severini, who answered that three years ago the King of Poland had conferred the order of St. Stanislas, and the title of Chamberlain, on him.

'I see,' I cried, 'in Poland a chamberlain ranks as an adjutant-general, so Albergati calls himself general, but general of what?'

Delighted at being able to avenge myself by turning the good man into ridicule, I wrote a burlesque dialogue, which I had printed, and which the bookseller sold for a '*baiocco*' apiece; in a few days the entire edition was exhausted. The marquis had the sense not to notice this dialogue, and there the matter ended.

Signor di Zaguri, who had kept up a regular correspondence with me, had conceived a project for obtaining my pardon, and permission for me to re-enter my native country. We had worked in concert with Dandolo, my ever-devoted friend, who desired nothing so much as to see me reinstated. He wrote to me that I ought to live nearer the Venetian States, as near to them as possible, so that the inquisitors could have me watched, and assure themselves of my good conduct. Signor Zuliani, the brother of the Duchess of Fiano, promised to use all his influence in my favour.

I decided on Trieste, where Signor di Zaguri had an intimate friend to whom, he said, he would recommend me. I found several letters awaiting me there: one from Signor Dandolo, enclosing one from his friend, the patrician Marco Dona, addressed to the Baron Pittoni, chief of police. It was left open so that I could read how warmly I was recommended to this magistrate. I hastened to deliver it, and Pittoni assured me I could count on his protection. I spent the first ten days of my sojourn at Trieste in compiling the Memoirs I had collected at Warsaw, concerning all that had happened in Poland since the death of Elizabeth Petrovna, and I undertook to write a history of the troubles of the

unhappy country up to its dismemberment, which was going on at that very time.

I had foreseen this event, when the diet of Poland recognised the Czarina (who had just died) as Empress of all the Russias, and the Elector of Brandenbourg as King of Prussia. I never published more than three volumes of my history, owing to the knavery of the printer, who did not abide by our conditions. The four last manuscript volumes will be found among my papers at my death, and whoever takes possession of my papers can publish them if he thinks fit. The thing has become indifferent to me.

It was revenge, ambition, and folly, which lost Poland. It was folly, daughter of shame and indolence, which caused the downfall of France. Every dethroned king must have been a fool; every fool of a king deserves to be dethroned. Louis perished in consequence of his folly. If he had had the prudence and the wit which a king should have who seeks to govern a wise and witty people, he would still be on the throne, and he would have spared France the horrors into which she has been plunged by a gang of scoundrels, by the cowardice and perversity of her aristocracy, and the avarice of a despotic, fanatic, and too powerful priesthood. The sickness now raging in France could be easily cured elsewhere, but I fear the French are incurable. Posterity will know, as for me, I am too old. The French emigrants may inspire pity in those kinds of people who are always ready to pity anybody and anything, but they only inspire me with contempt, for I believe if they had rallied firmly round the throne, they might have opposed force to force, and have crushed, no matter how, the common herd, without giving it time to assassinate the nation. Finally, I repeat that their duty, their interest, and their honour demanded that they should save their king, or bury themselves under the ruins of the throne. Instead of this they had gone to parade their pride and their disgrace in foreign lands, doing no good to themselves, and much harm to those who are forced to feed them. What will become of France? I can-

not say, but I know this, that a headless body cannot last long, for it is in the head that reason lodges.

On the 1st of December, Baron Pittoni sent me a message begging me to go to his house, where I should meet some one who had come from Venice on purpose to see me. I dressed hurriedly, and in a state of extreme curiosity; the baron presented me to a handsome man about five-and-thirty or forty, who looked at me with evident interest.

'My heart tells me,' said I, 'that you are Signor di Zaguri.'

'You are right, my dear Casanova. When I heard from Dandolo that you were here, I determined to come and congratulate you on your approaching return to your country, which will take place, if not this year, at least next.'

A fine old man, who was in the room, joined in these congratulations, and begged Pittoni to bring me with him to dine at his house, although, he added, he had not the pleasure of my acquaintance.

'What!' exclaimed Zaguri, 'Casanova has been in this little town for ten days, and the Venetian consul is not acquainted with him?'

I hastened to say, 'It is my own fault; I thought it better not to pay the consul a visit, as he might consider me contraband merchandise.'

The consul replied wittily, that from that moment he would consider me as transitory merchandise, in quarantine for the time being, and that in consequence his house would always be open to me. The friendship of this good old man, which I was fortunate enough to win, was of the greatest use to me during the two years I spent at Trieste, and I have always thought that he contributed largely to obtaining my pardon, which was at that time the only thing I lived for, for I was suffering from nostalgia, what the Swiss and Germans call *Heimweh*, and the French *mal du pays*.

Heimweh is a mortal disease; for I verily believe I should have died of homesickness had I not at last been enabled to return, and spend nine years in the bosom of the country

which had always proved such a cruel step-mother to me. When Zaguri returned to Venice, I accompanied him to the very borders of the state, and then went back to Trieste.

I lived quietly at Trieste, for I had only fifteen sequins a month certain income, and was obliged to practise economy. I never gambled, and I dined every day at some friend's house—the Venetian consul's, the French consul's, or Baron Pittoni's. I was able to render some service to my beloved country, through the medium of the consul. These services consisted in the arrangement of certain old treaties of commerce, and the launching of new ones, by both of which the Venetian States profited considerably, in return for which I received several gratifications of a hundred ducats at a time, and a pension of ten sequins a month. These sums sufficed to put me at my ease, and to enable me to spend a little money on my own pleasures. I was not displeased, either, to find myself in the pay of the very tribunal which had deprived me of my liberty, and whose power I had braved. It was to me a great triumph, and honour demanded that I should serve it as well and faithfully as I could. About this time the Venetian general, Palmanova, a patrician of the Prota family, came to Trieste on a visit to the governor. He was accompanied by the procurator, Erizzo. I met them both at the French consul's house, and the general asked me if I amused myself as well at Trieste as I had done in Paris, sixteen years before. I answered that the sixteen years more, and the hundred thousand francs less, obliged me to lead a very different life. Just then the consul came in, and said the felucca was waiting. It seemed there was a Venetian man of war anchored outside the port, and the whole party was going to visit it. Madame de Lantieri, the consul's daughter, asked me to join them, and her father added his invitation to hers, and the three Venetian nobles joined in. I answered, laughingly, that a duty laid upon me many years before forced me to deprive myself of the pleasure of accompanying them—it was forbidden me to set my foot on Venetian territory.

At this every one cried out: 'You have nothing to fear. You will be with us. We are not traitors. Your doubts are offensive.'

'All this is very well, ladies and gentlemen, and I will give in willingly if one of their excellencies here can assure me that the State Inquisitors will not be informed (and perhaps no later than to-morrow) that I had the temerity to share in this expedition without my sentence of banishment being raised.'

At these words every one was mute, no one dared to hazard such an assertion. The captain of the ship, who was present, and whom I did not know, spoke for some time with the consul, in a low voice, and finally the party went without me. The next day I heard that the captain declared I had acted wisely, for if any one had told him my name and the charges against me while on the ship, he should have felt it his duty to retain me. The procurator, Erizzo, while congratulating me on my prudence, assured me that the tribunal should be acquainted of my respect for its decisions.

CHAPTER XXXV

WAITING FOR A PARDON

THE ladies of Trieste being all seized with a strong desire to act French comedies, chose me as stage manager and general director. I had not only to choose the pieces, but to distribute the parts. I found my duties brought me a great deal of trouble, and none of the pleasure I had anticipated.

All my actresses were novices; I had to teach them everything, and run about all day long from one to the other, trying to make them learn their speeches by heart. As soon as they knew one page they forgot the preceding one. Every one knows that if a revolution of any kind is necessary in Italy, it is in education—especially feminine education. The best families are content with sending their daughters to a convent for a few years, whence they pass into the arms of a husband, whom they have often never seen till the day before the wedding, and to whom they often remain indifferent all the days of their life. Both sides then correct the chances of matrimony by *sigisbéeisme;* and one may safely say that in good society in Italy lineal descent is merely a matter of convention. Few and far between are the noble lords who can say, 'I bear the same name as my father.'

Among the people of quality who came to Gorice for the French plays was a certain Count Torriani, who persuaded me to spend the autumn with him at a country house he possessed about six miles from Gorice.

He was not yet thirty, and unmarried. His pasty face expressed cruelty, disloyalty, treason, pride, brutality, sensuality, hatred, and jealousy, but his invitation was proffered so graciously that I could not but hope I misjudged him.

Every one spoke well of him. The only thing against him was that he was too fond of the fair sex, and was ferocious in avenging an affront. Neither of these qualities seemed unworthy of a gentleman, so I promised him I would meet him at Gorice the first day of September, and that we would go together to Spersa, his country seat.

When I arrived at his home at Gorice I was told he was out; but when I said I was his guest, my baggage was taken in from the carriage. I went off to see my friend Count Torres, and remained with him till supper-time, when I returned to my host. I then heard that he had gone to the country, and would not be back till next day, but a room had been taken for me, and supper ordered at the inn. I went to the inn, where I was badly lodged, and badly fed—no matter. I concluded he had no room for me in his house, though he ought to have told me so. Early next morning he appeared, thanked me for my punctuality, spoke of the pleasure he should have in my society, but regretted that he could not leave for Spersa for two days as on the morrow he had to attend the court, where judgment was to be pronounced in a case which he had against a farmer, who, he said, did not only owe him money which he refused to pay, but made claims on him as well.

'Well,' said I, 'I will go with you and hear the case; it will amuse me.'

A moment after he went off without even asking me when I was going to dine, or excusing himself for having been obliged to send me to the inn. I was at a loss to understand, but unwilling to believe that he was purposely rude.

'Come, Casanova,' said I to myself, 'you must have made a mistake. The knowledge of man is a bottomless pit, which you think you have explored, but there are depths beyond your experience. Let us go over it again. The count invited you to his country house; well then, being still in town, the good man does not owe you any hospitality. Patience, all will come right. You ought perhaps to have excused yourself

for arriving inopportunely, though I can hardly see how that might be; well, as I said before, patience.'

I was one of the first in the audience-hall next day, where I saw assembled the judges, the contending parties, and their respective advocates. The peasant's lawyer was an honest-looking, middle-aged man; the count's had all the appearance of a scoundrel; his client stood by him, a disdainful smile on his face. Count Torres, who was with me, said he was acquainted with the whole affair; the peasant had twice lost his cause, but had twice appealed to a higher court, and had paid his expenses. Torriano would win, again, he said, unless the peasant could prove that the receipts in his possession were really signed by the count, which the latter denied. If the peasant lost, said Torres, he would be not only ruined, but condemned to the galleys; whereas if he wins, he added, it is Torriano and his advocate who will deserve to be sent there. The peasant was surrounded by his wife and two daughters, who were pretty enough to win all the cases in the world. Their mien was modest, but calm and assured. They were poorly dressed, and one could tell by their humble look and downcast eyes that they were the victims of oppression. Each advocate had the right to speak for two hours. The peasant's defender only spoke for thirty minutes; he laid before the judge the book of receipts, all endorsed with the count's signature, until the day on which he gave him notice because, like a worthy man, he refused to allow his daughters to go alone to the count's house. He then produced the other book by means of which the count tried to prove that these receipts were all forged. He pointed out their absurdities, and finished by saying that if the case were carried to a court of criminal jurisprudence his client could make known to justice the two forgers who had been paid by the count to hatch these infamous documents, and ruin an honest family. He demanded that all expenses should be paid by the count, as well as damages for his client's loss of time and reputation.

The count's barrister spoke for two hours, and then the

judge had to silence him. There were no insults which he did not shower on his opponent, the experts, and the peasant, whom he assured he would visit when in the galleys. After this violent harangue we retired into another hall to await the sentence. The peasant and his family stood in a distant corner; they had no flattering friends or covert enemies to talk to, while round Count Torriano were at least a dozen persons, all crying out that he was sure to win his cause, but that if such an extravagant thing as his losing it were to happen, he must compel the peasant to prove the forgeries by taking it into a higher court.

I whispered to Torres that the count ought to lose if only on account of the infamous speech of his advocate, who ought to have his ears slit, and be placed in the pillory for six months.

'And his client with him?' said Torres in a loud voice.

After an hour the magistrate's clerk appeared with two papers in his hand, one of which he gave to Torriano, the other to the peasant; the count burst out laughing, and read his out in a loud voice.

The court condemned him to recognise the receipts given to the peasant, and to pay him one year's wages as damages, reserving to the latter the right to attack him again in virtue of other grievances which he might have against him.

Torriani's advocate seemed downcast, but his employer gave him six sequins, and we all went away. Left alone with the condemned man, I asked him if he would appeal in Vienna.

'My appeal will be of another kind,' he said grimly. I did not ask him for an explanation.

We left Gorice next morning, and got to Spersa in less than two hours. The house was a large one on a hill. Torriani showed me over it, and then led me to my apartment, a single room on the ground floor, badly furnished, with very little air or light.

'This,' said he, 'was a favourite room of my father's;

like you, he delighted in study. You will enjoy complete liberty here, no one will come near you.'

We dined very late, and had no supper. The food was passable, so was the wine, and the society of a priest who acted bailiff for him; but one thing which shocked me was, that my host, who ate very rapidly, had the impertinence to tell me, laughingly, it is true, that I ate too slowly. After dinner, he said we should meet next day, and I went to my room to put my affairs in order; I was then at work on the second volume of my Polish history. When night closed in I went out to ask for a light; a servant brought me one tallow candle. I thought this abominable; I should have had wax candles, or a lamp. When I asked if there was any particular servant charged with attending on me, I was told that the count had given no orders on that head, 'but,' added the man, 'we are at your service when you call.'

As there was no bell in my room, I saw I should have to hunt all over the house for them when I wanted a service.

'And who will do my room?'

'One of the maids.'

'Has she a private key?'

'She has no need of one, sir, there is no lock on your door; you can fasten it at night with the bolt.'

I was half inclined to laugh, but not so when a little later I put the candle out by accident in snuffing it. As I could not run about a strange house in the dark, I undressed and got into bed as best I could. Next day I rose and, in my dressing-gown and night-cap, went to wish my host good morning. I found him in the hands of his valet. When I said I had come to breakfast with him, he replied that he never breakfasted, and begged me not to derange myself in the morning, as he was always busy with his peasants, who, he said, were all thieves. Then he added that if I was in the habit of taking breakfast, I had only to order the cook to prepare me some coffee.

'Would you be good enough to tell your servant to dress my hair, when you have finished with him?'

'I am surprised you did not bring a servant with you.'

'Had I known that the slight amount of valeting I require would have inconvenienced you, I would have done so.'

'It won't inconvenience me, but you, for you will have to wait.'

'I will wait. And one thing more I must have, and that is a key to the door of my room. I have important papers lying about.'

'Everything is safe in my house.'

'I am sure of it, but a letter is easily mislaid.'

He waited five minutes, then told the servant to see that a lock was fitted to the door of my room.

There was a book at his bedside, and I asked him if I might see what he read to send himself to sleep. He answered politely, that he begged I would not look at it. I stepped back from it promptly, saying with a smile that I was sure it was a prayer-book, but that I would promise not to tell any one.

'You guessed rightly,' he said laughing.

I was much piqued. I had always been treated with the greatest consideration. I returned to my room, and thought it seriously over. My first idea was to leave at once, particularly when I thought of the wax candle I had seen on his table, and the miserable tallow one which graced my own, and though I only possessed fifty ducats in the world, I was as proud as when I was rich. I rejected the idea of leaving, however, as I did not want to put myself in the wrong.

Next morning the servant brought me a cup of coffee, ready poured out, and sweetened to his taste, or the taste of the cook. I could not touch it, and told him with a laugh —I had either to laugh or throw it in his face—that that was not the way to serve it.

While he was dressing my hair, I asked him why he gave me a tallow candle, instead of two wax ones.

'Sir,' he replied, 'I could only give you what was given

to me. I was given one wax candle for my master, one tallow one for you.'

When I saw the priest-bailiff, I begged him to sell me a pound of wax candles at the price he paid for them, as it was he who was charged with the purchase of stores for the house; he agreed to do so, but at the same time said he should be obliged to acquaint his master of the fact. I had been told that dinner was at one o'clock, and I went to the dining-room punctually at half-past twelve, and was surprised to hear that the count had been at table some time! I restrained myself, and simply said the abbé had told me dinner would be at one.

'So it is, ordinarily,' said the count, 'but as I have some visits to pay, I ordered it for twelve to-day.' He then told the servants to bring back the dishes which had already been presented, but I refused, contenting myself with what was on the table. I went with him to visit the family del Mestre, who live in the neighbourhood, and we finished the day agreeably with them. Next day the priest returned me the money for the candles, saying his master had said I was to be treated in every way as he was himself; and the servant brought my coffee on a tray, with the sugar and cream separate; the valet came to dress my hair; there was a padlock on the door; all was changed.

'I have taught him a lesson,' I thought; 'all will go well now'; but I counted without my host. Before a week had passed, he went off, without a word of warning, to Gorice, where he remained ten days. On his return, I told him I had gone to Spersa to keep him company, but that as my presence did not seem to be appreciated, I would return to Trieste as I had no desire to die of *ennui* in his dull house. He made the most ample apologies, assured me such a thing would never happen again, and succeeded in persuading me to stay.

His whole wealth consisted of vineyards, which yielded an excellent white wine, and brought him in about a thousand sequins a year; but yet he was on the high-road to ruin. Convinced that the peasants robbed him, he was always

hanging about their huts. He would go in, and if he found any bunches of grapes, would distribute the most vigorous blows with his cane to the unlucky creatures. They might go down on their knees to him, but nothing averted his anger. I was often the unwilling witness of these arbitrary and cruel executions, and was much rejoiced one day when two vigorous peasants set on him with a broomstick, and gave him a good thrashing. He ran away with his tail between his legs, and only recovered his courage to quarrel with me for having witnessed his humiliation. Soon the whole village was aware of his misadventure, and every one laughed, for he was feared by every one, and loved by none. The two peasants had to seek refuge in flight; and the count gave out that in future he would pay his domiciliary visits armed with a pistol. At this the whole community took alarm, and two deputies were chosen to inform him that unless he solemnly promised to give up molesting them in their modest dwellings, they would leave the village *en masse* within a week. There was to my way of thinking something sublime in the simple eloquence of these sturdy labourers.

'We have the right to eat a bunch of grapes from a vine which produces them, because we water it with the sweat of our brow; so your cook has the right to taste the dishes he prepares for you, before he serves them.'

This threat of desertion, coming as it did just before the vintage, brought him to reason, and he promised what they required of him.

The following incident ended my connection with him:—

I led a wearisome life at Spersa, with no sort of distraction. I became interested in a poor young widow, who was pretty and amiable. I made her a few little presents, and obtained her good graces. I persuaded her to visit me at night, so that no one should see her, and I let her in and out by a little door which opened on to the street. One morning after shutting the door behind her, I heard her cry out. I rushed forth, and saw the brutal Torriani holding her by her skirts, and beating her with a stick. I sprang on him, and

we both fell to the ground, while the poor woman made off. I was at a disadvantage, as I had only my dressing-gown on, but I held the stick with one hand, and with the other tried my best to strangle him. I squeezed so hard that his tongue lolled out, and he was forced to let go of my hair, which he had grasped, for fear of choking. I then gave him one good blow on the head, before re-entering my room. As soon as I was dressed I went out and found a peasant with a cart, who promised to take me to Gorice in time for dinner.

I was packing up my things, when one of the servants came to say the count begged I would speak to him a moment. I wrote in French, that after what had happened we must not meet, except away from his house. A moment later he appeared in person.

'As you will not come to me, I have come to you,' he said.

'What do you wish to say to me?'

'That in leaving my house in this manner you are disgracing me, and that I will not allow you to go.'

'Really! I should like to know how you will prevent me?'

'I can, at least, prevent you going alone, for honour demands that we leave together.'

'Ah! now I understand you; go and get your sword or your pistols, and you will find that there is room in my cart for two.'

'No, you must leave with me in my carriage, and after having dined with me.'

'I should be considered mad if I eat with you. Our fight is known to the whole village, now, and an ugly story it is!'

'Then I will dine here with you; people can say what they like. Send away your cart, and at least try to prevent any further scandal.'

I was obliged to give way to him, and he remained with me till noon, trying to persuade me that I was in the wrong,

and that it was no business of mine if he chose to beat a peasant on the highway; she did not belong to me.'

'What,' said I, 'do you suppose I would allow you to ill-treat a woman—a feeble and amiable creature, who had only that moment left my arms! I should have been as cowardly and as monstrous as you had I not interfered. Could you in my place have remained indifferent to such a barbarous scene, even if her assailant had been a great prince?'

He had no reply, and after remaining silent a short time, declared that anyhow the duel would do no credit to the survivor, and he meant to fight to the death.

'As far as that goes,' I said, laughing, 'you are at liberty not to expose yourself if you like. I am quite satisfied with the lesson I have already given you. As to the duel *à outrance*, I hope to leave you among the living, in spite of your fury, and shall content myself with laying you up for a long time, so as to keep you quiet and give you a chance to reflect on your past and your future. If, on the other hand, you are the better man, you can deal with me as you think fit.'

'We will go alone into a wood,' said he, 'and I will give my coachman orders to take you wheresoever you tell him, should you return to the carriage alone.'

'Very good. Now is it to be swords or pistols?'

'Swords.'

We left after an excellent dinner, during which I was very lively. I heard him tell the coachman to follow the Gorice road, and waited, expecting him to point out a spot in the woods where we could settle our differences. But we reached Gorice without his saying a word, and then he told the man to drive to the inn. I burst out laughing, for I saw now the famous duel would end in smoke.

'You are right,' he said, 'we must remain good friends. Promise me not to speak of this affair, or to treat it lightly if any one speaks of it to you.'

I promised, we shook hands, and there the matter ended. The following day I took a quiet lodging at Gorice, and set

to work to finish the second volume of my book. I went backwards and forwards between Trieste and Gorice, for I could render no service to the State Inquisitors in the latter place, and naturally they did not pay me to remain idle. My quarrel with Torriani was talked of by everybody, but I treated it as a bagatelle, and he made a point of showing me most exaggerated marks of friendship whenever we met. Still, as I knew him to be a dangerous man, I made a point of declining all his invitations to dinner or supper. During carnival he married a young lady of good family, and made her unhappy as long as he lived. Fortunately for her, he died after thirteen or fourteen years of matrimony, mad and miserable as he had lived.

I left Gorice the last day of the year 1773, and took up my quarters at the large inn on the public square at Trieste. . . .

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Thus abruptly end the MEMOIRS OF GIACOMO CASANOVA, *Chevalier de Seingalt, Knight of the Golden Spur, Prothonotary Apostolic, and Scoundrel Cosmopolitic.*

Whether the author died before the work was complete, whether the concluding volumes were destroyed by himself or his literary executors, or whether the MS. fell into bad hands, seems a matter of uncertainty, and the materials available towards a continuation of the Memoirs are extremely fragmentary. We know, however, that Casanova at last succeeded in obtaining his pardon from the authorities of the Republic, and he returned to Venice, where he exercised the honourable office of secret agent of the State Inquisitors—in plain language, he became a spy. It seems that the Knight of the Golden Spur made a rather indifferent "agent"; not surely, as a French writer suggests, because the dirty work was too dirty for his fingers, but probably because he was getting old and stupid and out-of-date, and failed to keep in touch with new forms of turpi-

tude. He left Venice again and paid a visit to Vienna, saw beloved Paris once more, and there met Count Wallenstein or Waldstein. The conversation turned on magic and the occult sciences, in which Casanova was an adept, and the count took a fancy to the charlatan. In short, Casanova became librarian at the count's Castle of Dux, near Teplitz, and there he spent the fourteen remaining years of his life.

As the Prince de Ligne (from whose Memoirs we learn these particulars) remarks, Casanova's life had been a stormy and adventurous one, and it might have been expected that he would have found his patron's library a pleasant refuge after so many toils and travels. But the man carried rough weather and storm in his own heart, and found daily opportunities of mortification and resentment. The coffee was ill made, the maccaroni not cooked in the true Italian style, the dogs had bayed during the night, he had been made to dine at a small table, the parish priest had tried to convert him, the soup had been served too hot on purpose to annoy him, he had not been introduced to a distinguished guest, the count had lent a book without telling him, a groom had not taken off his hat; such were his complaints. The fact is Casanova felt his dependent position and his utter poverty, and was all the more determined to stand to his dignity as a man who had talked with all the crowned heads of Europe, and had fought a duel with a Polish general. And he had another reason for finding life bitter—he had lived beyond his time. Louis XV was dead, and Louis XVI had been guillotined; the Revolution had come; and Casanova, his dress, and his manners, appeared as odd and antique as some "blood of the Regency" would appear to us of these days. Sixty years before, Marcel, the famous dancing-master, had taught young Casanova how to enter a room with a lowly and ceremonious bow; and still, though the eighteenth century is drawing to a close, old Casanova enters the rooms of Dux with the same stately bow, but now every one laughs. Old Casanova treads the grave measures of the minuet; they applauded his dancing once, but now

every one laughs. Young Casanova was always dressed in the height of the fashion; but the age of powder, wigs, velvets, and silks has departed, and old Casanova's attempts at elegance ("Strass" diamonds have replaced the genuine stones with him) are likewise greeted with laughter. No wonder the old adventurer denounces the whole house as Jacobins and canaille; the world, he feels, is permanently out of joint for him; everything is cross, and every one is in a conspiracy to drive the iron into his soul.

At last these persecutions, real or imaginary, drive him away from Dux; he considers his genius bids him go, and, as before, he obeys. Casanova has but little pleasure or profit out of this his last journey; he has to dance attendance in ante-chambers; no one will give him any office, whether as tutor, librarian, or chamberlain. In one quarter only is he well received—namely, by the famous Duke of Weimar; but in a few days he becomes madly jealous of the duke's more famous protégés, Goethe and Wieland, and goes off declaiming against them and German literature generally—with which literature he was wholly unacquainted. From Weimar to Berlin; where there are Jews to whom he has introductions. Casanova thinks them ignorant, superstitious, and knavish; but they lend him money, and he gives bills on Count Wallenstein, which are paid. In six weeks the wanderer returns to Dux, and is welcomed with open arms, his journeys are over at last.

But not his troubles. A week after his return there are strawberries at dessert; every one is served before himself, and when the plate comes round to him it is empty. Worse still: his portrait is missing from his room, and is discovered salement placarde a la porte des lieux d'aisance!

Five more years of life remained to him. They were passed in such petty mortifications as we have narrated, in grieving over his affreuse *vieillesse, and in laments over the conquest of his native land Venice, once so splendid and powerful. His appetite began to fail, and with it failed the last source of pleasure, so death came to him somewhat as*

a release. He received the sacraments with devotion, exclaimed,—

"Grand Dieu, et vous tous temoins de ma mort j'ai vecu en philosophe, et je meurs en Chretien," and so died.

It was a quiet ending to a wonderfully brilliant and entirely useless career. It has been suggested that if the age in which Casanova lived had been less corrupt, he himself might have used his all but universal talents to some advantage, but to our mind Casanova would have always remained Casanova. He came of a family of adventurers, and the reader of his memoirs will remark how he continually ruined his prospects by his ineradicable love for disreputable company. His "Bohemianism" was in his blood, and in his old age he regrets—not his follies, but his inability to commit folly any longer. Now and again we are inclined to pronounce Casanova to be an amiable man; and if to his generosity and good nature he had added some elementary knowledge of the distinction between right and wrong, he might certainly have laid some claim to the character. The Prince de Ligne draws the following portrait of him under the name of Aventuros:

"He would be a handsome man if he were not ugly; he is tall and strongly built, but his dark complexion and his glittering eyes give him a fierce expression. He is easier to annoy than amuse; he laughs little but makes others laugh by the peculiar turn he gives to his conversation. He knows everything except those matters on the knowledge of which he chiefly prides himself, namely, dancing, the French language, good taste, and knowledge of the world. Everything about him is comic, except his comedies; and all his writings are philosophical, saving those which treat of philosophy."

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